



## **International Union for Conservation of Nature**

### **Countries:**

**Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone  
Mano River Union  
West Africa**

### **PROJECT DOCUMENT**

*Final version*

### **Mano River Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project**

#### **Brief Description of the project**

The proposed GEF-funded “Mano River Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project” will be implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). It targets the conservation and sustainable use of the transboundary water basins and their biodiversity resources within the Mano River Union member states. These resources are of highest importance for the sub-region, seriously affected by socio-political problems with displaced and suffering populations, and demand support under these very difficult contexts. The project seeks to promote holistic approaches to integrated ecosystem management and to design participatory and community-based strategies, which will lead to in-situ conservation and sustainable use of soil, water and biota in the river basins and on their watersheds.

The project will be implemented in the Upper Guinea forest covering Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire with the objective of strengthening the management of transboundary natural resources for sustained ecological benefits and improved livelihoods for the forest adjacent communities. Therefore, the project will play a transformational role in the livelihoods of the communities living in the forest area covered by the project, enabling them to benefit from the ecosystem while not threatening it.

The proposed project is consistent with GEF 5 focal area strategies for biodiversity (BD), land degradation (LD), and international waters (IW) as it will contribute to the conservation of the Upper Guinea Forest ecosystem through the sustainable management of transboundary water basins. The Upper Guinea Forest is degrading and disappearing at an alarming rate, with adverse consequences for the quantity and quality of linked ecosystem services that underpin productivity of the land (LD), forests (BD) and water resources (IW). This has a direct impact on human well-being. As a consequence of the degradation, forest-dependent people struggle to sustain their livelihoods, often using non sustainable techniques (including poaching, logging, slash and burn agriculture, and illegal mining). The project will support local communities in developing alternative means of income generation, which will lead to an increase in forest coverage and its related benefits both at the local (ecosystem services) and global (biodiversity, enhanced carbon sinks) levels. It will enhance local stakeholders' involvement in the management of transboundary ecosystem. The project will also

reinforce regional coordination among countries with a particular focus on selected ecosystems. Thus strengthening the regional regulatory framework on management of transboundary natural resources under the auspice of the Mano River Union. Through its international waters component the project will support foundational capacity building and institutional reinforcement for regional ecosystem management of transboundary water systems. National inter-ministry committees would contribute to the development of a regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and subsequently to the preparation of a preliminary Strategic Action Plan. Benefits of collaboration on transboundary basin and adoption by cooperating states in a Transboundary Water Resource Management approach contribute to improve community livelihoods, targeted in component 1, and to address environmental issues. Results will lead to a net gain in forest area (including the recovery of degraded forests) as well as increased transboundary water consideration and management in regional policies. The transboundary nature of the water resources will also entail regional collaboration resulting in enhanced regional cooperation and community interactions.

## List of Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank;
ANADER	Agence Nationale d'Appui au Développement Rural;
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development;
BRIDGE	Building River Dialogue and Governance;
BRLi	Consultant Company BRLi;
CEO	Chef Executive Officer;
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund;
CI	Ivory Coast;
CSO	Civil Society Organization;
CSSL	Conservation Society of Sierra Leone;
DFID	UK governmental Department for International Development;
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States;
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment;
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan;
ESMS	Environmental and Social Management System;
EU	European Union;
FACE	Farmers Associated to Conserve the Environment;
FDA	Forest Department Agency;
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade mechanism;
FPCF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility;
FPIC	Free prior informed consent;
FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration;
GEF	Global Environment Facility;
GGO	IUCN's Global Gender Office;
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit;
GN	Guinea;
HYCOS	Hydrological Cycle Observation System;
IFC	International Finance Corporation;
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions;
ISLA	Initiative for Sustainable Landscapes;
ISP	Institutional Strengthening Plans;
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature;
IWMP	Integrated Water Management Program;
IWRM	International Water Resources Management;
KfW	German government-owned development bank;
LB	Liberia;
MARFOP	Mano River Forest Ecosystem Management Program;
MINEF	Ministry of Water and Forest (CI);
MRU	Mano River Union;
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action;
NBA	Niger Basin Authority;
NFP	National Forest Policy;
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization;
NPAA	National Protected Areas Authority;
NPCU	National Project Coordination Unit;
OIPR	Ivorian Office of Parks and Reserves
OI-REN	Ivorian Observatory for Natural Resources Sustainable Development;
OMVS	Office de Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal;

PAAS	Project Appraisal and Approval System;
PACO	West and Central Africa Program;
PCMS	Project Complaints Management System;
PGS	Project Guidelines and Standards;
PIF	Project Identification Form;
PNECI	National Water Partnership in Ivory Coast;
PPG	Project Preparation Grant;
PRE	Ecosystems Restoration Project;
PTF	Funding and Technical Partners;
RA	Rainforest Alliance;
RBA	Rights-based approach;
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation;
RICCE	Rural Integrated Center for Community Empowerment;
RPMU	Regional Project Management Unit;
SAP	Strategic Action Plan;
SL	Sierra Leone;
SLBCP	Sierra Leone Biodiversity Conservation Project;
SODECI	Water Supply Company of Ivory Coast;
SODEFOR	Forest Development Company (CI);
STEWARDS	Sustainable and Thriving Environments for West African Regional Development;
TDA	Transboundary Diagnosis Analysis;
ToR	Terms of references;
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program;
USAID	United States Agency for International Development;
WA-BICC	West Africa – Biodiversity and Climate Change;
WB	World Bank;
WCF	Wildlife Conservation Fund;
WRCU	Water Resources Coordination Unit;

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## 1 Project Profile

<b>1.1 Project title</b>	Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project.
<b>1.2 Project Number (GEF ID / IUCN ID)</b>	GEF ID: 4953 ; IUCN ID: <i>{to be assigned}</i>
<b>1.3 Project type (FSP or MSP)</b>	Full-sized Project (FSP)
<b>1.4 Trust Fund</b>	GEF Trust Fund
<b>1.5 GEF strategic objectives and focal areas</b>	<b>GEF Strategic Objective 1</b> - Conserve, sustainably use, and manage biodiversity, ecosystems and natural resources globally, taking into account the anticipated impacts of climate change. <b>Multi-focal Areas</b> (Biodiversity, Land Degradation and International Waters).
<b>1.6 IUCN programme priority</b>	(1) valuing and conserving nature and (2) effective and equitable governance of nature's use
<b>1.7 Geographical scope</b>	Regional/Multi-country: Mano River Union area (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone)
<b>1.8 Project executing agencies</b>	<b>Implementing Agency:</b> International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) <b>Executing Agency at regional level:</b> Mano River Union (MRU) <b>Executing Agencies at national level:</b> <b>Côte d'Ivoire:</b> Direction de la gestion et de la protection des ressources en eau, Ministère des Eaux et Forêts; <b>Guinea:</b> Centre Forestier de N'Zérékoré, Ministère de l'Environnement, des Eaux et des Forêts; <b>Liberia:</b> Forestry Development Authority, <b>Sierra Leone:</b> National Protected Area Authority, Ministry of Agricultural Forestry and Food Security
<b>1.9 Duration of project (including expected start and end dates)</b>	48 months; Commencement: January 2017; Completion: December 2020.

### 1.10 Project cost (Summary)

Item	USD
A. GEF financing	6,970,000
B. Co-financing	
- WA-BiCC / USAID project ( <i>in kind</i> )	10,000,000 <i>{confirmed}</i>
- ROAM-CI/IUCN-UNEP-DFID ( <i>in kind</i> )	307,772 <i>{confirmed}</i>
- Co-funding pledge, Liberia and Guinea( <i>in kind</i> )	45,686,290 <i>{confirmed}</i>
- BRIDGE / IUCN ( <i>in kind</i> )	290,000 <i>{confirmed}</i>
- MRU / Secretariat ( <i>in kind</i> )	106,580 <i>{confirmed}</i>
C. Sub-total co-financing	56,390,642
D. Total (A+C)	63,360,642



			enrichment, - 43,800 ha in the buffer zones of Ziama-Wonegizi protected forests (27,400ha in GN and 16,400 ha in LB) under different restoration Interventions (e.g., natural regeneration, sustainable forest management, agroforestry, reforestation, enrichment planting)		
<i>Output 1.1.1.</i> Site-specific guidelines for restoration of productivity of tree-based systems produced to promote the use of best practices in forest and landscape restoration interventions and sedentary agricultural practices in the main production sectors affecting forest ecosystems	1.1.d: Number of site-specific guidelines on forest landscape and water resources management available.	1.1.d: 0	1.1.d: 4 (1 per country)	Guideline documents disseminated	
<i>Output 1.1.2.</i> Training systems established for farmers on how to improve management practices to meet certification programs	1.1.e: Number of trained farmers (gender disaggregated) on how to improve management practices to meet certification programs developed and implemented	1.1.e: 0	1.1.e: 800 (200 per country)	Annual project progress reports Tripartite review and mid-term and final evaluations Interviews of local farmer organizations	
<i>Output 1.1.3.</i> Improved management of agriculture activities within the vicinity of protected areas	1.1.f: Number of trained staff (gender disaggregated) in improving the management of biomass in agriculture activities within the vicinity of protected areas	1.1.f: 0	1.1.f: 80 (20 per country)	Annual monitoring reporting programs available	Trained national staff do not leave their position/sector once they acquire skills
<i>Output 1.1.4.</i> Integrated land use plans developed to enable the generation of sustainable sources of income from different restoration interventions	1.1.g: Number of integrated land use plans developed 1.1.f: percentage increase of income from sustainably	1.1.g: 0 1.1.f: (TBC)	1.1.g: 4 (1 per country) 1.1.f: 25% increase of income	Local land use plans available	

	managed forest products and agroforestry				
<b>Outcome 2.1.</b> Water resources are managed at the regional level based on transboundary institutional organs	2.1.a: Number of sub-basins in the Mano River Union area covered by transboundary water resources management structures	2.1.a: 0	2.1.a: 4	Tripartite review and mid-term and final evaluation reports;  RPMU documents (annual reports, meeting minutes, etc)	<u>Assumption / Risk:</u> Project capacity to adequately develop and implement the needed national and regional coordination and communication frameworks Political will of riparian countries to continue to give priority to sustainable development and wise environmental management. Changes in economic, political and social conditions that may derail national commitments
<i>Output 2.1.1.</i> National Inter-Ministerial Implementation Committees established and operational	2.1.b: Number of National Inter-Ministerial Implementation Committee (NIC) established  2.1.c: Number of sessions of National Inter-Ministerial Implementation Committee organized	2.1.b: 0  2.1.c: 0	2.1.b: 4  2.1.c: 24 (2 per country and per year)	Bylaws, NIC members ToR; Minutes of meetings, decisions; Press releases; governmental decisions Interviews	<u>Assumption:</u> Smooth cooperation between national sectoral ministries <u>Risk:</u> Conflicts between sectoral ministries prevent regular meetings of the committee.
<i>Output 2.1.2:</i> Improved capacities to prepare Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan	2.1.d: Number of training programme established and training material disseminated; 2.1.e: Number of Male/Female staff trained;  2.1.f: Number of training workshops organized about TDA-SAP and for water governance champions; 2.1.g: Number of study tours organized 2.1.h. SAP endorsed and an initial action programme is adopted	2.1.d: 0  2.1.e: 0  2.1.f: 0  2.1.g: 0  2.1.h: 0	2.1.d: 1  2.1.e: 20 (5 per country)  2.1.f: 2 (regional workshops)  2.1.g: 1  2.1.h: 1	Minutes of meetings, and minutes of training workshops Press releases; governmental decisions Interviews Training programme and training material Study tour report Environmental database  TDA and SAP documents	<u>Assumption:</u> Continued good political relations in the region; Governments move forward in the implementation of IWRM at national and local levels; TDA-SAP methodology is accepted by the four governments. <u>Risks:</u> Institutional gaps and lack of funding prevent IWRM implementation and prevent local communities to benefit from the SAP actions.  <u>Assumption:</u> Strong involvement of stakeholders <u>Risks:</u> socio-political instability

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<p><b>Outcome 2.2.</b> Strengthened government agencies and institutions for transboundary water resource management</p>	<p>2.2.a: Number of government agencies and institutions with capacity for transboundary water resource management</p>	<p>2.2.a: 0</p>	<p>2.2.a: 5 (1 per country and 1 regional)</p>	<p>Project records Records of official agreements to support SAP projects Local government budgets and investment plans Interviews with local community representatives</p>	<p><u>Assumption / Risk:</u> Project capacity to adequately develop and implement the needed national and regional coordination and communication frameworks Political will of riparian countries to continue to give priority to sustainable development and wise environmental management. Changes in economic, political and social conditions that may derail national commitments</p>
<p><i>Output 2.2.1. Awareness raised on transboundary and environmental issues</i></p>	<p>2.2.b: Number of awareness raising tools and events developed and implemented: number of awareness-raising days, number and type of publications, and number and content of radio-programme 2.2.c: Number of people in the Mano basin reporting awareness on water quality and riparian ecosystem management</p>	<p>2.2.b: 0  2.2.c: (TBC)</p>	<p>2.2.b: 9 programmes, events and related publications, and radio-programmes. (one in each national portions of the three targeted transboundary basins)  2.2.c: 20,000 (5,000 per country)</p>	<p>Surveys/interviews Findings from tripartite review and mid-term project evaluations Annual project progress reports</p>	<p><u>Assumption:</u> Suitable awareness raising techniques can be adapted to local conditions.</p>
<p><i>Output 2.2.2. The regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action plan with initial actions are prepared adopted at ministerial level</i></p>	<p>2.2.d: Number of regional TDA developed and under the process of being validated at ministerial level; 2.2.e: Number of preliminary regional SAP developed; 2.2.f: Introduction of climate change and resilience measures in the SAP;</p>	<p>2.2.d: 0  2.2.e: 0  2.2.f: Not existing.</p>	<p>2.2.d: 1 (including a focus on Mano river basin, Moa/Makona basin, Cavally basin, and Great Scarcies/Kolente basin)  2.2.e: 1 (including a focus on Mano river basin, Moa/Makona basin, Cavally basin, and Great Scarcies/Kolente basin)  2.2.f: Incorporated in the SAP.</p>	<p>Bylaws, TDA endorsed by countries, published and broadly disseminated; Preliminary SAP and Workplan and submitted to the relevant ministry for validation Interviews of local communities.</p>	<p><u>Assumption:</u> No major disagreements between participating governments, and local communities regarding sources and impacts of environmental degradation.</p>

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<p><i>Output 2.2.3.</i> IW learn products generated and disseminated to a broad community of local, national and regional stakeholders</p>	<p>2.2.g: Number of websites created;</p> <p>2.2.h: Number of newsletter published on websites;</p> <p>2.2.i: Number of IWLEARN database developed.</p> <p>2.2.j: Number of experience notes</p> <p>2.2.k: Participation to the biannual GEF International Water Conferences</p>	<p>2.2.g: 1 (in Sierra Leone at National Level)</p> <p>2.2.h: 0</p> <p>2.2.i: 0</p> <p>2.2.j: 0</p> <p>2.2.k: 0</p>	<p>2.2.g 4 (in Sierra Leone at national Level and for the 3 targeted basins)</p> <p>2.2.h: 12 (quarterly)</p> <p>2.2.i: 1</p> <p>2.2.j: 2</p> <p>2.2.k: 1</p>	<p>Websites IW Learn website MRU website Conferences minutes</p>	<p><u>Assumption:</u> The project RPMU and regional and national executing agencies dedicate adequate resources to IW learn and communication products.</p>
<p><i>Output 2.2.4.</i> Financial resource mobilization strategy developed and implemented</p>	<p>2.2.l: Number of resource mobilization strategy documents developed for MRU and national executing agencies</p> <p>2.2.m: Ramping up of the country contributions to cover operational financing needs of the Water Resources Authority to be established under the auspice of MRU</p> <p>2.2.n: Number of international donors conference organized</p> <p>2.2.o: Number of regional events in which the projects is presented</p>	<p>2.2.l: 0</p> <p>2.2.m: 0%</p> <p>2.2.n: 0</p> <p>2.2.o: 0</p>	<p>2.2.l: 1</p> <p>2.2.m: 30%</p> <p>2.2.n: 1</p> <p>2.2.o: 3</p>	<p>RPMU and IUCN project progress reports Fund raising strategy report Regional events proceedings Minutes of the donor conference</p>	
<p><b>Outcome 3.1:</b> The project is effectively and efficiently managed.</p>					

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<p>Output 3.1.1: Project management team established and functional</p>	<p>2.2.p: Number of project management unit established at regional level</p> <p>2.2.q: Number of project coordination unit established at national level</p>	<p>2.2.p: 0</p> <p>2.2.q: 0</p>	<p>2.2.p: 1</p> <p>2.2.q: 4</p>	<p>RPMU and IUCN project reports. progress</p>	
<p>Output 3.1.2. <i>Project is monitored, evaluated and audited</i></p>	<p>2.2.r. Number of reports and audits</p>	<p>2.2.r: 0</p>	<p>2.2.r: 5</p>	<p>Project reports and audits</p>	

### 3 Background and situation analysis (Baseline course of action)

#### 3.1 Background and context

The Mano River Union covers four countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The total area of the territory covered by the MRU is **751 450 km<sup>2</sup>**, distributed as follows: 71 740 km<sup>2</sup> for Sierra Leone, 111 370 km<sup>2</sup> for Liberia, 245 857 km<sup>2</sup> for Guinea and 322 462 km<sup>2</sup> for Côte d'Ivoire. The population is estimated in 2010 to 41,800,000 inhabitants (6.29 million for Sierra Leone, 3.33 million for Liberia; 10.21 million for Guinea and 22 million for Côte d'Ivoire) (UNHCR, 2012; MRU, 2011).

The four countries share **10 transboundary river basins** (see Figure 1, Map of the transboundary watersheds and protected areas within the area covered by the four Member States of the Mano River Union). In addition to being very narrow-shaped and small-sized (22,000 km<sup>2</sup> and 320 km-long on average), flowing from North-East to South-West, these coastal basins appear to have similar profiles. They consist in biodiversity key areas with conservation stakes in their upstream catchments and large protected areas covering the outlet areas. They face water quality and water quantity issues, during low flows for the latter, in their downstream catchments, where mining operations and agro-industrial plantations are involved (MRU, 2011).

The four countries of the MRU also share the last remnants of a unique biodiversity hotspot area, the formerly contiguous Upper Guinea Forest, whose area and biodiversity are constantly decreasing because of the fast development of agroindustrial plantations and the uncontrolled expansion of both slash and burn and mining activities, combined with poaching (CEPF, 2015).

These relicts of the Upper Guinean Forest ecosystem are now confined to only some transboundary protected area complexes whose conservation will be addressed by this upcoming GEF project and which are considered as the future project intervention sites.

The four transboundary protected area complexes of (1) Sapo NP-Grebo NF-Taï NP, (2) Gola Rainforest NP- Gola NF, (3) Ziama NF-Wonegisi NF and (4) Mt. Nimba WHR-Diecke NF contain the last large blocks of intact and semi-intact forest mosaics left in the entire Upper Guinean Forest ecosystem and represent the unique opportunity within this ecosystem for maintaining the last large intact stands of forest (CEPF, 2015).

However, until today, shifting agriculture, mining and poaching activities are advancing steadily into the remaining forest areas along formerly constructed logging roads. **The current and the proposed National Parks, in completion with their buffer zones and corridors, correspond to the only remaining core areas giving the opportunity to launch an integrated forest ecosystem management in the whole area covered by the MRU** (see Figure 1) (GRASP/UNEP, 2009).

MRU Countries have **largely weak economies**. Despite the wealth of natural resources in the Mano River Union sub-region, high levels of poverty persist in the member countries. The region is one of the poorest in Africa, with average annual income estimated at US\$ 460. All four countries suffer from poverty, civil conflicts, rapid urbanization (resulting in forest clearance), balance of payments difficulties, over-reliance on primary products for export earnings and over-dependence on bi-lateral and multi-lateral loans. The countries are at different stages of both political and economic development, however. Individual economic indicators show some variation, ranging from those with a per capita gross national income (GNI) of over \$ 700 per annum (Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire) to those with less than \$ 500 per capita (Guinea, Liberia) (World Bank statistics, 2014), and a debt burden ranging from 14-55% of GNI (World Bank statistics, 2013). Similarly, national institutions reflect variations in strength and infrastructure, while there is considerable diversity in the functioning of political systems.

The economic problems of the region are further exacerbated by the **high population growth rate**. Currently MRU area supports a population of about 41,800,000, predominantly living in fishing, farming or forest communities. At the present average population growth rate of about 2.5% per annum, this figure is projected to rise to about 53,500,000 by the year 2025. As this population embarks on development for economic survival a lot of pressure is put on land and forest resources (UNHCR, 2012).

All four countries have experienced **internal conflicts** and, or, instability for varying periods over the last 25 years. However, they now enjoy relative peace after holding elections in the recent past (MRU, 2013). Their economic, political and social systems were significantly eroded during the periods of

unrest and are still considered fragile despite the recent peaceful period. All four countries possess significant natural resources below and above the ground including marine resources in the form of fishery resources and the possibility for oil and gas as well. The exploitation of these resources and the distribution of the gains and costs have contributed to insecurity and inequality that in turn raised tensions and led to instability and human rights violations including sexual and gender based violence. In all four MRU Member States there have been tensions along the borders especially during and immediately after internal conflict. However there is no history of unresolved border claims or of sustained military confrontation. The region has so far avoided inter-country conflict. Nevertheless all four have experienced long periods of insecurity, instability and eventually internal conflict (IISD, 2011). For this reason the present project responds to the target of promoting regional public goods and will contribute significantly to the ECOWAS and African Union's objectives of regional integration particularly in West Africa.

Three of the countries in the Mano River Union - Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone - are slowly **recovering from the worst Ebola outbreak** since the disease was identified. The socio-economic impact of the outbreak in the region was significant, the growth rate of the three countries dropping from 4.5% to 0.4%, from 5.9% to 0.7% and 11.3% to 6% respectively.

**Observed changes in the regional climate** in recent decades have resulted in decreased precipitation. Overuse and misuse of land resources, related to agriculture expansion and forest elimination, have resulted in decreased run-off and degraded water quality (SL-MTA, 2008). This degradation is particularly crucial for the natural habitats around the outlets of the water catchment areas, where local population is exposed more and more frequently to bush fire, seasonal unavailability of drinkable water, freshwater resources and inland fisheries (STEWART, 2013; OGUIDAP/OIPR/FDA-EPA, 2011). More downstream, the region's water resources, which serve as the transboundary link between countries, are increasingly being overcommitted for agriculture, animal husbandry and hydroelectric power generation, even as these resources are dwindling. This is leading to conflict situations (MRU, 2013; Liberia, 2015).

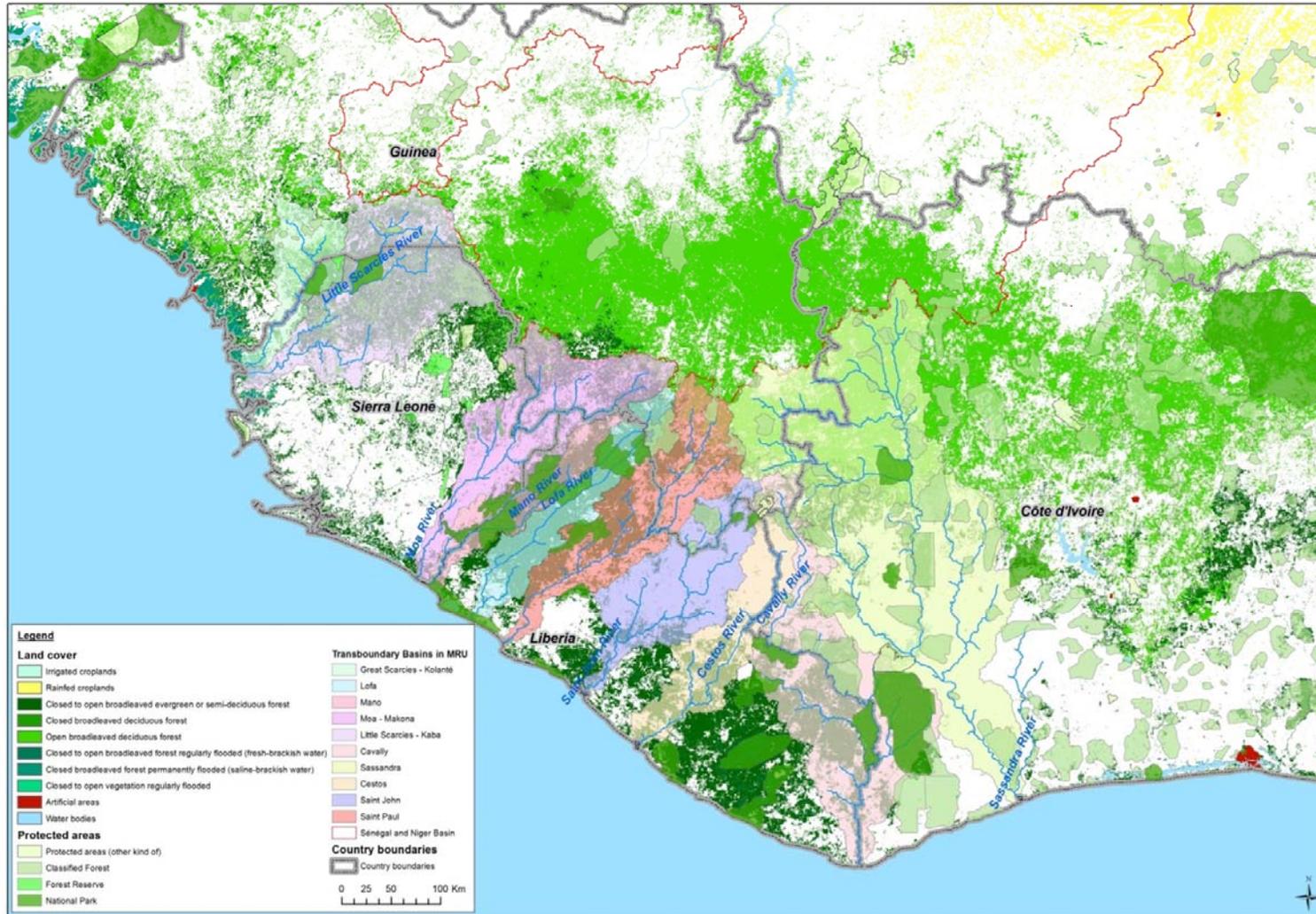
Regarding future climate changes, regionally downscaled projections of temperature changes in West Africa show a clear pattern of overall warming in both mean and maximum temperatures, and a trend of increasing change from coastal to interior regions (CEPF, 2015). Analyses of trends in these projections show that, on average, mean annual temperatures are projected to increase by 1.9°C by 2055 (from 25.6°C to 27.5°C), and approximately 35% of the Upper Guinean Forest area has a projected mean annual temperature increase of greater than 2°C. Intra-annual variability in monthly mean temperatures is predicted to remain relatively constant (1.5°C). Mean maximum monthly temperatures are expected to rise by a similar amount on average by 2055 (30.5°C to 32.3°C) (CEPF, 2015). Projections of changes to precipitation regimes in West Africa are uncertain and the differences in projections between different models are high (CEPF, 2015; Christensen et al. 2013). This is due, in particular, to the complex nature of the West African monsoon system. Overall, most Africa-wide and regional projections broadly suggest an increase in rainfall in the region, and a possible small delay in the development of the West African rainy season (low confidence). Should the latter occur, its impact would be considerable, given the key role rainy season onset plays in triggering vegetation changes and local atmospheric heat and moisture cycle feedbacks (CEPF, 2015; Christensen et al. 2013)

The human population in the target region is dependent on these forest resources for a variety of timber and non-timber forest products. Profit driven industrial timber extraction and extractive mining interests are harvesting substantial renewable and non-renewable natural resources and often disregard sustainability of resource use. The conservation of this biodiversity is therefore critical to the sustainable management of forest resources given the increasing demands (Liberia, 2006). The remaining forest is highly fragmented, restricting habitats to isolated patches, and threatening the ecosystem's unique species of flora and fauna. Restoration of a significant part of the forest area will present a potential for carbon sequestration with monetary value that can be given to environmental benefits coming from activities aimed at reducing carbon emissions (Winrock international, 2014). Opportunities for pilot projects under REDD will be evaluated and piloted where feasible.

Fortunately, all four MRU countries are now enjoying relative peace and are focusing on consolidating the peace and promoting sustainable development. Accordingly, these four countries recognize the imperative role of their water resources and forest ecosystems in sustainable development and are highly interested in integrated water and forest resources management approaches that are sensitive to the livelihoods needs of their populations (STEWART, 2010).

Consequently, the countries are devoted to invest in interventions that will promote integrated water resources management and ecosystems conservation as well as the sharing of benefits from their direct and indirect use. The MRU countries anticipate benefits from REDD+ as an additional incentive for preserving and better managing these resources (RSPB, 2014).

Figure 1: Map of the transboundary watersheds and protected areas within the area covered by the four Member States of the Mano River Union.



Source: BRLI, SRTM/UEMOA 2011 and ProtectedPlanet.net

### 3.2 Global environment problem

Particularly in biodiversity rich areas, increased rates of forest loss have reached critical proportions. The targeted area of **the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem is classified as a biodiversity hotspot**, which has an estimated 9000 vascular plants of which 25 per cent are endemic. The oil palm, the African ebony and the African mahogany are endemic to these ecosystems. In addition approximately 75 species and seven genera of birds are endemic to the region. Mammalian endemism is also very high with over 50 species recorded. Six primate species are endemic including the Diana monkey and the Olive colobus monkey. The diversity of fish species is also very high and includes over 510 freshwater species (*Source: Conservation International*).

According to the “West Africa Mineral Sector Strategic Assessment (WAMSSA)” undertaken by the World Bank in 2010 three out of the twelve critical issues affecting the Upper Guinea Forest are environmental (deforestation and loss of biodiversity, land degradation and reclamation of closed mines, water pollution). In fact, biodiversity is unique but **a large number of the endemic species within the region are threatened**. For instance, it is estimated that in Guinea only, 21 species of higher plants are threatened out of 3000, 12 species of mammals out of 190, 12 species of breeding birds out of 109, 1 species of reptile out of 94 and 1 species of amphibians out of 33 (*Source: Earth Trends, World Resources Institute, 2014*). The remaining portion of the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem is currently estimated at 93,047 km<sup>2</sup>, which represents approximately 15% of its original coverage (estimation done in 2001, Olson et al. 2001). The **deforestation rate is estimated at 300 km<sup>2</sup> per year**.

This dramatic decrease in the area of this important ecosystem is due to a combination of increased population and opportunistic settlements following years of conflict and people displacement (e.g., Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire), low level of economic opportunities for local populations and insufficient institutional capacity to design and enforce ecosystem management measures, such as restoration of degraded lands and biodiversity loss. For instance, illegal activities such as logging, artisanal mining, poaching and bush meat hunting have been disastrous for the forest. This situation has been worsened by land tenure issues (CEPF, 2015).

The major environmental problem within the area of the four Member States of the MRU results from an expanding and uncontrolled demand on forested land and natural resources in general and from the fragmentation, transformation and conversion of the forested lands to other types of land use cover in particular (World Bank, 2015).

In consequence, forest habitat degradation and loss as a result of continued unsustainable logging and mining operations, followed by uncontrollable shifting cultivation and poaching, are admitted by the MRU countries to constitute the primary negative impact on wild species of fauna and flora throughout the entire Upper Guinean Forests (Liberia, 2006).

Finally this overwhelming environmental problem causes the extinction of forest dependent/dwelling species, and the breakdown of critically important forest related ecological processes and functions. Thus it is important to take into account the different types of habitat disturbance so as to be able to determine relevant mitigation measures (KfW, 2013).

In response to these concerns, and the momentum caused by other initiatives and programs in the MRU area (Liberia, 2015), this GEF project has adopted a **standard social and environmental responsibility approach** (IUCN, 2015).

The last remaining stands shall be the focus of the forests integrated ecosystem management approach of this GEF project. It will seek to strengthen and develop their connectivity by restoring and protecting corridors between these remnant forests, currently under protection status or still on the way to being established (GRASP/UNEP, 2009; FFI, 2002). Also, it will aim to stabilize already cultivated land in the vicinity of protected areas by orientating/facilitating the development of different forest and landscape restoration interventions (e.g., natural regeneration, sustainable forest management, agroforestry, reforestation, and enrichment planting). These interventions should later on play the role of buffer zones and link the corridors. Mosaic-type restoration interventions (e.g. agroforestry, other tree-based systems, including natural regeneration and enrichment planting) would be encouraged for buffer zones. Wide-scale restoration approaches for corridors on the other hand would be mainly through natural regeneration, protection, law enforcement and reforestation (Centre Forestier de Nzérékoré, 2015; World Bank, 2015).

Further on, in compliance with the tenets of the national strategies (e.g. the national forestry policy and implementation strategy about forestry for communities, commerce and conservation, implemented by the Forestry Development Authority in Liberia) currently put in place by the member states, the social considerations are also important as the relevant forest blocks are in parts of countries overwhelmed with poverty, weak institutions, and great demand on forest resources for daily livelihoods and to satisfy local, national and international markets.

It is also noted that **deforestation**, defined as the overall functional degradation of natural land cover, and the lack of coordination in transboundary watersheds management **is likely to threaten the availability of water resources in the region**. This implies that water disputes might arise in the area as deforestation in upstream countries will negatively affect water quality and availability in downstream countries.

The transboundary river basins in the area include the Morro River (the major tributary of the Mano River), the Niger, the Senegal, the Gambia, the Great Scarcies/Kolanté and the Little Scarcies/Kaba (between Guinea and Sierra Leone), Lofa, Moa/Makona, St Paul, St John, Cestos, Cavally and Sassandra (between Liberia, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire) river basins (*Source, Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, land series, 2006*). The challenges in the river basins include:

- The decline in rainfall and average annual flow of watercourses due to increased climate variability;
- The technical and financial difficulties to access groundwater reserves of which very little is exploited today;
- The increasing preparation for the construction of dams, irrigation canals or inter-basin transfer systems;
- Functional degradation of various land cover types and deforestation in the forest ecosystem which impacts on water flows and quality in terms of siltation;
- Increased human activities due to population growth and expansion of settlements.

It is noted that these **issues are intensified in the border regions** where different policies, laws, and practices exist, and often complicate the management of natural resources. Therefore the lack of cooperation and regulation application among the riparian countries is a major threat for the sustainable management of existing transboundary natural resources or restoration of rapidly degrading ones. This has been further exacerbated by 20 years of conflict and civil unrest from which the Mano River Union Secretariat and member countries suffered substantially and lost important capacities (STEWART, 2010).

The building of a consensus on transboundary issues related to natural resources, including international waters, the harmonization of the national policies and the development of a regional strategy for the management of these transboundary natural resources will be the focus of the regional activities of the project.

### 3.3 Threats, roots causes and barriers analysis

#### 3.3.1 Threats

The above mentioned last remaining forest mosaics are under extreme pressure from uncontrolled widespread bush meat hunting and subsistence shifting cultivation principally, as consequences of rapidly extending alluvial gold and diamond mining activities along the main river systems (Moa in SL, Mano-Morro-Lofa in LB) in the MRU area. These human related pressures are resulting in forest fragmentation and degradation, a phenomenon of which an even exponentially increase had been observed after the end of the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone as people returned to their villages and mining and logging companies opened up formerly undisturbed or only lightly disturbed areas to hunting and settlement. This diagnostic was confirmed by the field mission (14-27 March 2016) led on the four different targeted sites during the PPG mission (see illustrations in Figures 2 to 4).

#### **Human-induced threats**

##### ***Logging***

A part of the production forestry and commercial timber extraction are large industries in the MRU countries, leading to the clearing of large forest areas. They have direct impacts on forests and wildlife in the Upper Guinean Forest. Despite a reduction in the number of concessions and the contraction of logging industries, informal and illegal logging continues to threaten biodiversity in the four countries. Small-scale companies tend to operate illegally and are responsible for much forest fragmentation, for example in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. Many small-scale companies are well-positioned in local markets and use their ties with local administrations and national governments to avoid the costly charges that would be required under stringent law enforcement (UNEP, 2008; CEPF, 2015)

##### ***Agriculture expansion***

Rural communities practice small-scale subsistence agriculture. They grow crops such as paddy rice and upland rice, cassava and maize with minimal fertilizer inputs and little to no irrigation. They combine it with smallholder cultivation of cash crops, such as cacao, in some areas. The growing demand for new agricultural land due to expanding human population threatens the biodiversity in Upper Guinean Forest.

In addition, until recent days there has been a **rapid increase in the demand for the development of large agro-industrial plantations** (oil palms and rubber), which, in addition to destroy large surfaces of classified forest, impact siltation and water quality. Cash crops have a long history in the in the four countries, especially cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire. This crop was originally associated with unregulated and profitable logging, which fuelled forest fragmentation, degradation and further deforestation in these countries. Such development patterns favored large-scale forestry and the granting of large timber concessions (Karsenty, 2007). Clearance of land for other monocultures, particularly industrial tree crops such as palm oil, rubber and *Gmelina arborea*, is also threatening forests and biodiversity in the hotspot. Côte d'Ivoire for instance is among the largest producers of palm oil in Africa (CEPF, 2015).

*Figure 2: Forest clearance for shifting cultivations in Guinée Forestière, Guinea [sweet potatoes (a) and coffee (b)]. Field reconnaissance led during the PPG mission in March 2016. Source: BRLi.*



(a)



(b)

## **Mining**

Until recent days there has been a **rapid increase in the demand for the development of industrial mining enterprises**, which in addition to destroy large surfaces of classified forest, impact siltation and water quality.

Many regions of the Mano River Union countries are rich in gold and other valuable minerals (Iron and manganese in particular). In addition, Liberia and Sierra Leone are particularly rich in diamonds. Their exploitation (especially surface mining) can cause direct loss of forest and other habitats, particularly because geodiversity of minerals tends to occur in the same areas as biodiversity. In addition, impacts on communities can be substantial, as these areas also often coincide with good agricultural land (rich, fertile soils and forests) (CEPF, 2015).

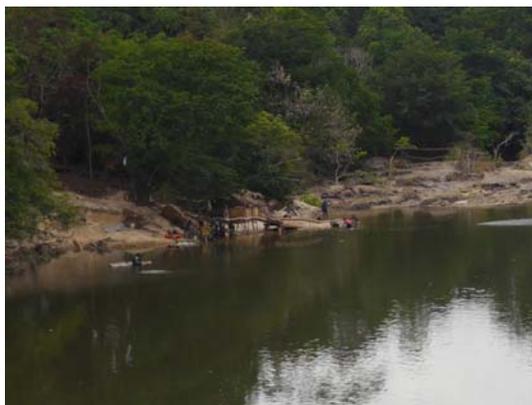
For instance, Yawri Bay in southwest Sierra Leone has recently been described as being highly threatened by mining, along with from agricultural expansion and road construction (BirdLife International 2015). Nimba Mountains (GN/LB/CI) have been identified as a transboundary Alliance for Zero Extinction site for more than 20 years by BirdLife International, and the mining of iron ore has been an issue of much controversy and contention between conservation groups and mining supporters (Mallon et al. 2015). The Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve at the centre of this site is also a Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site (in danger) but has nevertheless been reduced by 1,500 hectares to facilitate iron ore extraction (Edwards et al. 2014; CEPF, 2015).

Directly related to the anarchic intrusion of alluvial mining activities is the pollution of forest creeks. Further on, slash and burn activities and poaching of all kind of forest dwelling animals are common in the surrounding areas of mining centers and along the former logging roads and skidding trails in the forest.

*Figure 3: Gold mining by the Moa River in Sierra Leone (a) and mining activities directly in the Lofa River in Liberia (b). Field reconnaissance led during the PPG mission in March 2016. Source: BRLi.*



(a)



(b)

## **Urbanization**

The region has one of the fastest urban growth rates, yet with only 31 percent of its inhabitants living in agglomerations of more than 10,000 inhabitants, it remains one of the least urbanized regions (AFD 2009). Urbanization is occurring through the growth of small urban centers, as well as the expansion of existing large cities. Countries projected to experience particularly large shifts to urban populations by 2020 include Liberia (from 36.5 percent in 2000 to 53.5 percent in 2020). AFD (2009) also projects the formation by 2020 of an urban band of high density in the coastal area of the Gulf of Guinea. Residential and commercial development, driven predominantly by population growth and rural-to-urban migration, is placing increasing pressure on environmental resources. One region particularly threatened by residential and urban development is the Liberian portion of Lofa-Mano Basin, this basin being shared with Sierra Leone all along the Mano River.

MRU countries, particularly Liberia, experience large southward movement of populations of young men due to greater economic opportunities there. Accounting for net immigration to coastal countries in western Africa, the total urban population of the coastal zone was expected to double between 2000 and 2020 and to double again between 2020 and 2050 (UEMOA 2010). The impacts in terms of

land use are through horizontal spread of built-up areas, spread of development along coastal roads, and increased environmental pressures of food production in coastal landscapes such as through rice farming, salt production, and increased fishing effort (JEMOA 2010).

### ***Soil erosion, domestic and industrial pollutions***

Water resources are under increased pressure due to a combination of factors. The main existing concerns identified in the MRU basins are:

- Water quality degradation. The growing urbanization combined with the inadequate wastewater treatment systems, uncontrolled discharges from industrial and artisanal mining and agriculture activities, and agricultural run-off contribute to the degradation of both freshwater and near-shore marine waters in the Mano River Union, resulting in habitat degradation, loss of biological diversity and productivity, and degenerating human health. For instance, rubber plantations cause problems such as surface water pollution by chemical wastes and exposure of workers and local communities to toxic chemicals in Liberia and elsewhere (UNEP 2008; FAOSTAT 2015).
- Sedimentation, linked to erosion and run-off from deforested and agricultural lands, also threatens biodiversity in the hotspot. Deforestation for agricultural expansion leads to increased levels of runoff and greater sediment loads in rivers and lake systems, with subsequent impacts on freshwater species and habitats.
- Water-borne diseases. Degraded water quality leads to health risk as reliable water supply and sewage infrastructure are lacking, combined to the fact that domestic water is predominantly abstracted from surface water bodies.
- Degradation of water ecosystems. Biodiversity loss is observed both in the upstream parts of the basins as well as in the coastal areas (estuaries, mangroves), and
- Growth of aquatic weeds.

The increasing number of project consisting in construction of dams, irrigation canals or inter-basin transfer systems, which require an overall water management plan also impact water resource in Mano River Union.

### ***Firewood and charcoal production***

Local community forest use, including for fuelwood and charcoal production, can be managed sustainably in areas where population density is low and forests are not degraded. Yet, across the Upper Guinean Forest, exploitation is increasingly being carried out for trade as well as for household consumption, and the cumulative impact of numerous small-scale producers can be very significant. Studies show that fuelwood is often sourced from areas being cleared for agriculture or close to urban markets and that demand for fuelwood is however seldom the primary cause of forest conversion on a large scale (Arnold et al. 2003).

### ***Bushmeat hunting and wild life trade***

Hunting traditions are strong in the hotspot countries, and for rural communities, bushmeat consumption has historically represented a significant source of protein. The threat to biodiversity posed by bushmeat consumption and trade has proved very difficult to address. The productivity of forest systems, in terms of their ability to support high densities of large mammals is much lower than savanna systems in Africa. It is, therefore, fairly easy to over hunt and to effectively remove large-bodied mammals from the forest systems. Bushmeat hunting is, thus, considered as a major threat to some species in West Africa (Wicander 2012), and as one of the largest threats to tropical forest biodiversity (Wilkie et al. 2011, Harrison 2011, Abernethy et al. 2013), even in remote areas.

### ***Human intrusions in protected areas***

Another serious threat to the biodiversity of these last remaining forest blocks is the lack of comprehensive coverage with protected areas. The already legally established National Parks and Forest Reserves have high conservation value because there are the core areas of a vaster forest mosaic which allows species with various habitat requirements to range over large areas, migrating between them to meet their needs.

Presently, no legal status protects this broader landscape of forested areas. This situation threatens the survival of many seasonally migrating forest dwelling animals.

Awareness for such a broader landscape of which the protected areas are the key elements, has still to be raised to allow securing critical neighbouring areas as extensions to the core protected areas,

managing areas in collaboration with local villages to protect water catchment zones under forest cover and as corridors essential for the establishment of a legally funded protected area complex for the entire forest blocks of high conservation value.

*Figure 4: Human intrusions in the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone (a) and deforested area in river basin heads in Guinée Forestière, Guinea (b). Field reconnaissance led during the PPG mission in March 2016. Source: BRLi.*



### **Climate-induced threats**

#### ***Droughts and floods***

- Hartmann et al. 2013 predict an increase in frequency and intensity of drought, as well as of floods. As a consequence and due to the lack of basin-wide water management policies and a steady population growth, water scarcity related conflicts tend to arise at low flow season. This shall also impact climate change vulnerable freshwater species, especially in Sierra Leone. (Carr et al., 2014);
- Groundwater recharge is likely to decline, with groundwater shortages exacerbated by an increase in water demand and abstraction and reduced infiltration. This will make the access to groundwater reserves, of which very little is exploited today, more difficult technically and economically;
- Salinization of freshwater resources and land is of particular concern, both from natural sources, agricultural practices and sea water intrusion.

All combined, these factors are likely to have severe impacts on agriculture, human health and the potential for hydroelectric power generation in the region.

#### ***Bush Fires***

The increasing frequency and expansion of bush fires between the remnant forest relicts and the entering into the undefended reforested zones must be considered as particular threats to the northern, seasonally drier and more open semi deciduous forest types (as found in Wonegisi, Ziama and Diecke NF).

### 3.3.2 Root causes

The underlying causes for the above mentioned threats can be summarized as follows:

- **Poverty:** Most countries in the region are poor and poverty levels are highest in rural areas where communities are most dependent on direct exploitation of natural resources for their survival and livelihoods. Although there is rapid economic growth and a developing middle class in MRU countries, the poverty gap is widening across Sub-Saharan Africa. Poverty and inequality, coupled with lack of alternative options, drive communities to use unsustainable practices of resource exploitation, which threaten sites, species and ecosystem integrity;

- **Population growth:** National populations in MRU are growing, with an increasing proportion living in urban centres in all countries. Patterns of population growth and movement vary greatly between and within countries. In rural areas, increasing populations and inward migration can result in greatly increased demand for land, water and resources. This can, in turn, drive unsustainable resource exploitation practices, conflict over land and resources and direct threats to species, sites and corridors (including protected areas). The most fertile and productive areas of land and water (which may also be key areas for biodiversity and ecosystem services conservation) are often those under greatest pressure for unsustainable development;
- **Communities dependence on natural resources;**
- **The transboundary nature of the resources and inequitable systems of land and resource tenure** generate uses conflicts;
- **Absence of alternative livelihood opportunities:** communities are often constrained or driven to carry out unsustainable practices of land use or natural resource exploitation by a lack of alternative options. This can be the result of a variety of factors (specific to the community or location) – inability of communities to access ideas, technologies or funding support to initiate alternatives;
- **Economy of the country based primarily on primary sector;**

### 3.3.3 Barrier analysis

The main barriers on the way to counter the enumerated threats and root causes are identified as follows:

- Low availability of data and information:
  - The **lack or the inaccessibility of site specific data** and guidelines on basic scientific and practical management issues in the fields of sustainable utilization of timber and non-timber products and particularly integrated approaches of stabilized agricultural and agroforestry systems;
  - The **limited availability of hydrological and water-quality data, the absence of systematic hydrological monitoring, and of monitoring of water uses in the basins;**
  - The **non-availability of long lasting forest cover monitoring data**, allowing the comparative analysis in time and /or space of evolutionary trends in the different forested zones in the MRU Member States;
- Lack of knowledge:
  - It remains still a big lack or proven techniques and local knowledge of sustainable agricultural systems based on the integration of native forest tree species, which can be summarized as **insufficient understanding of adequate agroforestry technologies;**
  - Evidence base of sustainable applications of community-based forest management initiatives, with demonstration plots and supported by local institutions is lacking.
- Lack of capacity at national level:
  - The capacity of local institutions and administrations is still low concerning the development of water management policies, comprehensive site specific forest conservation strategies and management planning schemes;
  - Due to **insufficient demonstration projects and insufficient economic incentives** the traditional agricultural systems for rental smallholder cocoa and coffee plantations, with low input in pesticides and fertilizer, and half shaded by somehow useful forest trees are abandoned and lost over the time while replaced by short time shifting cultivation based on plantations fully exposed to sunlight;
- Lack of capacity at regional level:
  - Existing coordination mechanisms and cooperative arrangements remain weak at the level;
- Weak governance:

- National laws, policies or roadmaps, when existing, have only recently been established and are not yet or only partially implemented;
  - Limited resources to support and sustain national policies and implement national and local institutions mandates;
  - Comprehensive policies and suitable financing schemes for sustainable forestry projects attractive for private investors are still lacking;
  - Due to **inadequate legal/regulatory basis** and the correspondent institutions both for protected areas and water management, classic extractive and water-polluting land use systems, as unsustainable logging, mining and hunting, are still characteristic for and predominant in the MRU / project area;
  - Limited capacity and little coordination to enforce existing laws against illegal logging and mining activities as well as poaching persist in and around the protected areas due to the **weakness or absence of the national management authorities or inadequate intersectoral coordination** and insufficient regional agreements both for forest and water management, all expressing the low government priority on environment;
- Lack of education and awareness, and understanding and recognition of the real values of biodiversity and ecosystems.

### 3.3.4 Summary table of the threats, root causes and barriers

	Threats	Consequences	Root causes	Barriers analysis
Forest ecosystems	<u>Climate-induced:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bushfires;</li> <li>▪ Droughts;</li> </ul> <u>Human-induced:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agriculture expansion;</li> <li>▪ Agro-industrial plantations;</li> <li>▪ Industrial &amp; artisanal logging;</li> <li>▪ Mining;</li> <li>▪ Poaching;</li> <li>▪ Urbanization;</li> <li>▪ Bush meat hunting;</li> <li>▪ Firewood and charcoal production;</li> <li>▪ Human intrusions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Forest fragmentation and degradation (by farming, new settlement, roads and skid trails);</li> <li>▪ Biodiversity loss;</li> <li>▪ Soil &amp; food pollution;</li> <li>▪ Large scale ecosystem changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poverty &amp; population growth;</li> <li>▪ Lack of governance;</li> <li>▪ Communities dependence on natural resources &amp; Absence of alternative livelihood opportunities;</li> <li>▪ Economy of the country based on primary sector;</li> <li>▪ Permits' demands for industrial mining &amp; logging;</li> <li>▪ Inefficient agriculture production system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Insufficient understanding of adequate agroforestry technologies;</li> <li>▪ Insufficient demonstration projects;</li> <li>▪ Insufficient economic incentives;</li> <li>▪ Inadequate legal/regulatory basis;</li> <li>▪ lack or the inaccessibility of site specific data.</li> </ul>
Water resources	<u>Climate-induced:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decline in rainfall and average flows;</li> <li>▪ Water scarcity during low flows;</li> <li>▪ Floods.</li> </ul> <u>Human-induced:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Urbanization;</li> <li>▪ Soil erosion, domestic and industrial pollutions;</li> <li>▪ Mining;</li> <li>▪ Agriculture expansion;</li> <li>▪ Agro-industrial plantations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Water quality degradation (mining, agro-industrial plantations discharges chemicals);</li> <li>▪ Water-borne diseases;</li> <li>▪ Degradation of water ecosystems;</li> <li>▪ Growth of aquatic weeds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poverty &amp; population growth;</li> <li>▪ Transboundary resources;</li> <li>▪ Difficulties to access groundwater reserves of which very little is exploited today;</li> <li>▪ Degradation of products and service functions and loss of tree-based vegetation cover.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of hydrological and water-quality data, of systematic hydrological monitoring, and of monitoring of water uses;</li> <li>▪ No systematic assessment of restoration opportunities;</li> <li>▪ Weak coordination;</li> <li>▪ National laws, policies or roadmaps not implemented;</li> <li>▪ Low capacity of local institutions and administration.</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Institutional, sectoral and policy context

#### **Regional level**

At Regional level, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Mano River Union (MRU) are the key stakeholders. ECOWAS and MRU have a **Memorandum of Understanding**<sup>1</sup> stating clearly that any regional project restricted to the four MRU countries shall fall under MRU responsibility.

The Mano River Union was established in 1973 with the objective of sub-regional economic integration. The MRU Secretariat located in Freetown, Sierra Leone, provides the institutional and administrative machinery through which the governments of the four states implement the regional policies and programmes. The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary General. Resident Coordinators who report directly to the Secretary General represent the Secretariat in Monrovia, Conakry and Abidjan. In these three latter countries, the Resident Coordinators are hosted by the national ministries in charge of regional affairs. MRU Secretariat is directly responsible for liaising with national institutions in Sierra Leone. MRU Secretariat communicates with the Member States through ministries responsible for planning and economic development with designated National Focal Points for each member state. The Secretariat is able to influence national policies based on the Union's Ministerial Council that is the main policy making body.

A preliminary assessment of MRU capacities was carried out during the PPG mission. This assessment was based on information collected during the stakeholders' consultations at national and regional levels and on the Institutional Strengthening Plans (ISP) recently designed by MRU in collaboration with the WA-BiCC project. The key findings of this assessment are the following:

- Identified technical capacity needs regarding water and natural resources management:
  - Need to strengthen capacity to support decision makers on informed decision making;
  - Need to strengthen skills to conduct baseline and vulnerability assessments;
  - Need to strengthen the database of regional experts on biodiversity and climate change;
  - Need to reinforce the capacities of the organization related to PES, REDD+, coastal adaptation, GIS and wildlife trafficking;
  - Finalize plan to develop environmental policy frameworks and identify policy gaps.
- MRU has a leverage to facilitate the implementation of regional projects at the highest level. MRU seems also to be in a position to coordinate dialogue platforms gathering national stakeholders from the four countries;
- Limited capacity to implement project interventions at local/community level.

Overall, MRU requires capacity strengthening and institutional support for achieving its objectives. However, despite limited technical capacities in the field of transboundary water and ecosystems conservation and management, the present GEF-supported project, along with the WA-BiCC project, constitutes an opportunity to provide MRU with required training and support to improve capacities at regional level.

#### **National Level**

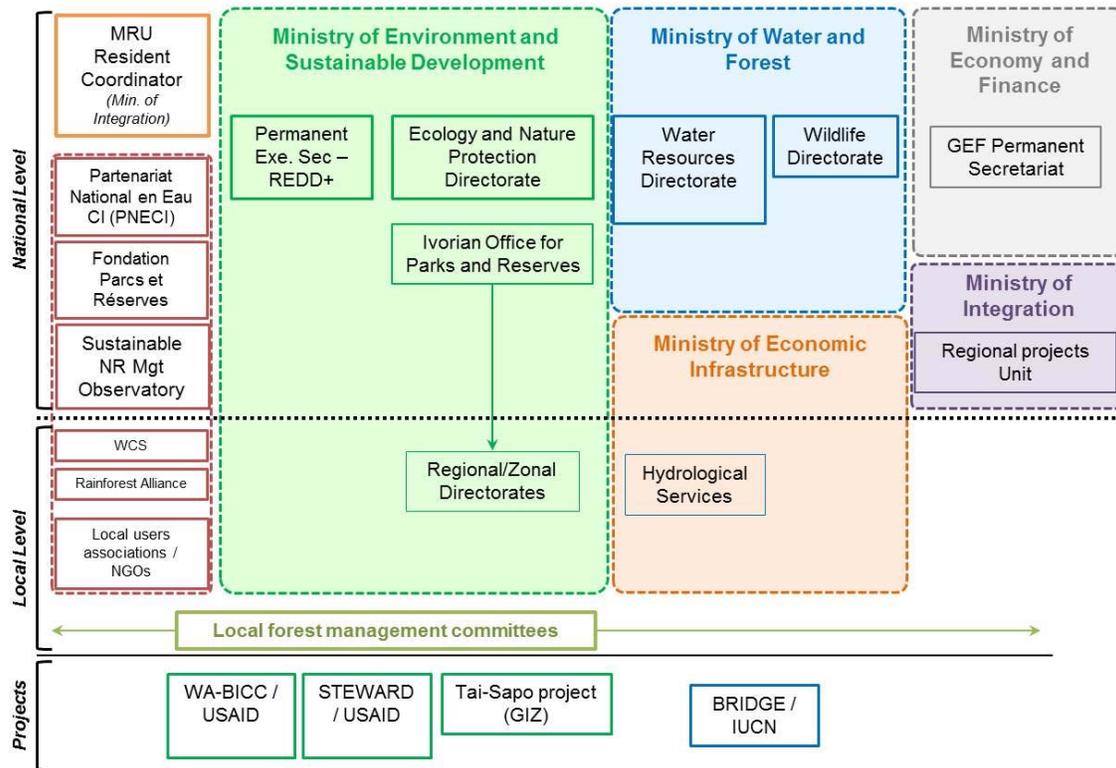
##### ***Institutional overview***

The following diagrams depict the current institutional set-up of institutions and organizations with a mandate in water or ecosystem management at national and local levels for each MRU Member State. Being based on a preliminary analysis, they may display a partial view of the stakeholders' landscape.

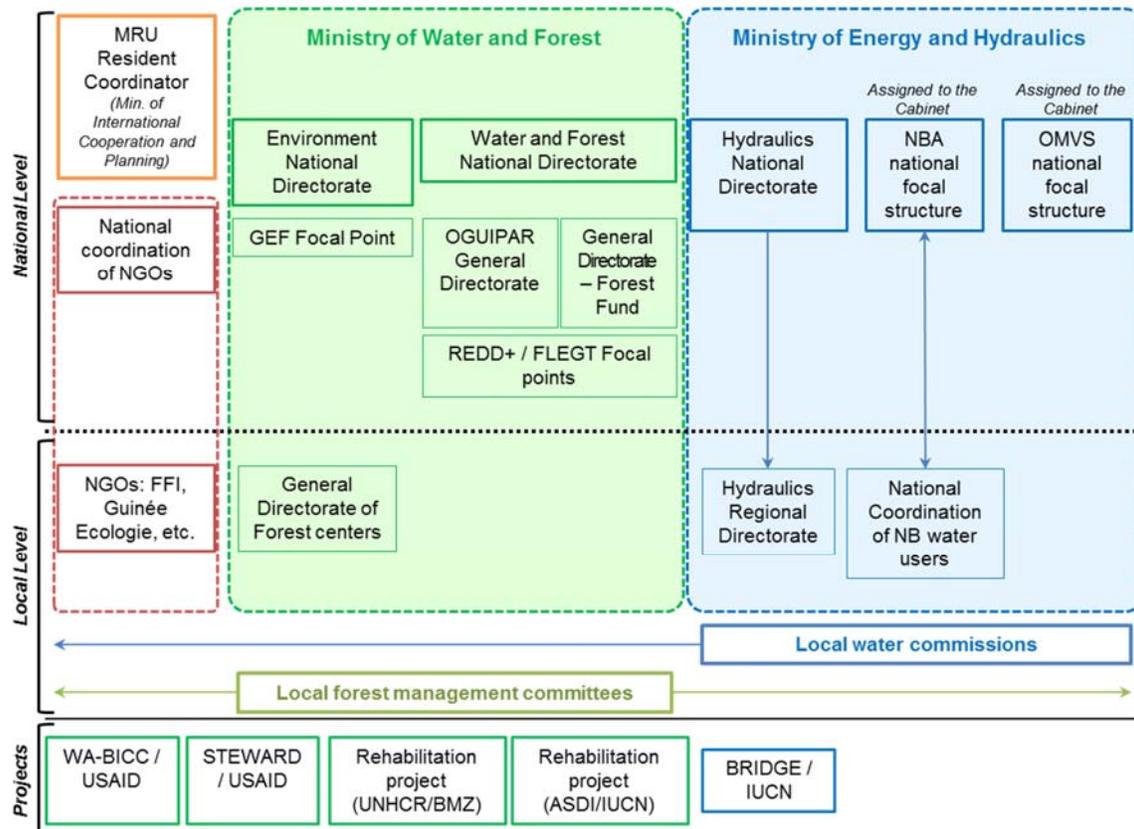
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<sup>1</sup> The MoU was signed on January 29th, 2015 at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

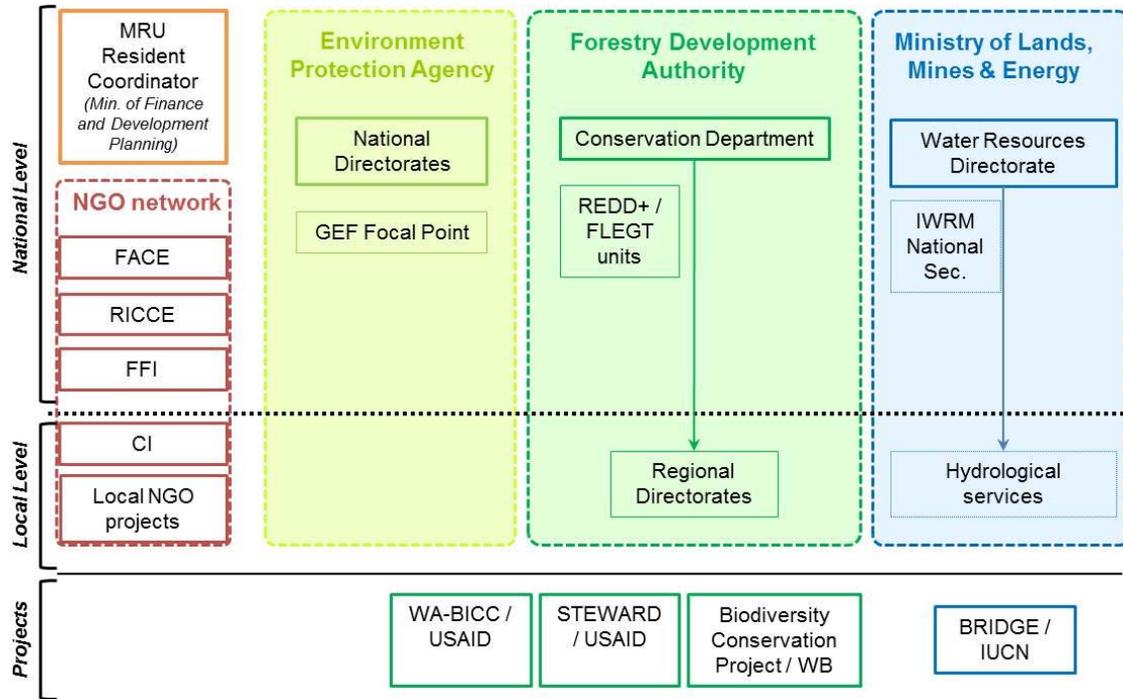
**Côte d'Ivoire**



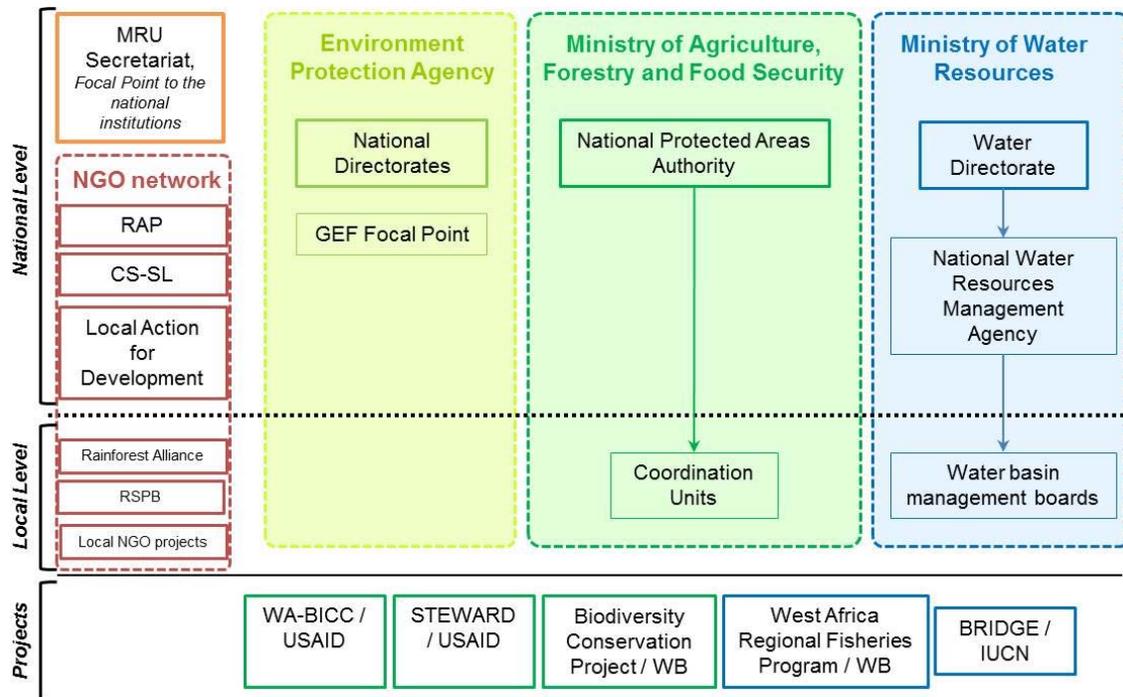
**Guinea**



**Liberia**



**Sierra Leone**



### **Forest ecosystems management**

Due to recent evolutions in the institutional development of forest ecosystems management there is a multitude of organisms and institutions in charge of forest and protected area management in the four MRU Member States, which are arranged and interconnected in each country in a specific way.

In Liberia the management of the forest estate and the creation of protected areas are under the responsibility of the Liberian Forest Development Authority (FDA). In other environmental sectors the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) intervenes in a complementary way. Both bodies have an autonomous status directly attached to the Presidency.

In Sierra Leone, the institutional set-up is similar: the corresponding institutional organizations are the National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) and the Environment Protection Agency (EPA). NPAA is linked to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry whereas EPA is part of the Ministry of Environment.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the institutional set-up is different. On the one hand, the Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves (OIPR) under the Ministry of Environment is in charge of the Protected areas and on the other hand the Société pour le Développement des Forêts (SODEFOR) under the Ministry of Water and Forests is in charge of the management of the National forests.

Finally, in Guinea, the Direction Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (DNEF), directorate of the Ministry of Environment, Water and Forest, is in charge of management activities in the sector. The Direction Nationale de l'Environnement (DNE), directorate of the same ministry, is in charge to implement the environmental public policies.

### **Water management**

#### **Institutional set-up at national level**

Institutional conflicts prevent a smooth implementation of IWRM:

- The water management mandate is spread amongst different ministries in Côte d'Ivoire. The Ministry of Water and Forest (Water Resources Protection and Management Directorate) is in charge of the development and implementation of the national water management policy whereas the hydrological services are administered by the Ministry of Economic Infrastructure;
- The Guinean Ministry of Energy and Hydraulics is split based on the main basin delineation. Niger and Senegal basins have their own National Focal Structure, related to NBA and OMVS, and directly under the responsibility of the Cabinet. They enjoy strong support from international donors for IWRM implementation. The National Hydraulics Directorate is responsible for the IWRM implementation in the remaining small basins. This Directorate does not receive sufficient funding from the government and without international support it will have no mean to implement the national policy. Additionally, funds, practices and activities are not harmonized at national level;
- Sierra Leone recently established the new Ministry of Water. Collaborations with other national institutions are obviously difficult or not existing. The Ministry of Water is supported by DFID/UK, through technical assistance, to draft a legislative reform, the National Water and Sanitation Policy and to build the capacity of institutions to develop a multi-sector approach to tackling water sector reform;
- In Liberia, the Water Resources Directorate of the Ministry of Land, Mines and Energy is responsible for the water policy. It relies on local hydrological services for the monitoring of water resources.

IWRM implementation requires cross-sectoral coordination between every national and local stakeholder. Coordination between national institutions within the same country remains however a challenge. Adequate transversal coordination platforms, such as an inter-ministerial task force, shall be proposed to ease project implementation at national level.

**IWRM principles implementation.** The four countries initiated the implementation of the IWRM principles in their national laws, policies and strategies. They however remain at the very early stages of implementation:

- Côte d'Ivoire developed a Water Code in 1998 and the PLANGIRE action plan in 2009. Implementation of both documents is still awaited. However, Côte d'Ivoire benefits from a strong international support to develop transboundary water resource management in the Volta and Niger basins. Thanks to this support, significant progress has been made in the corresponding sub-basins (Baoulé, Bagoué, Volta Noire). This situation generates strong gaps with interventions carried in other transboundary and national basins (Comoé, Cavally, Sassandra, etc);
- Liberia has no specific legal framework but developed a National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy in 2009. Institutional recommendations, water management organization and planning orientations have not been implemented yet; Liberia is supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation for a water resources diagnosis (Hydrological report of Liberia).
- Guinea developed a Water Code in 1994, further detailed in IWRM road map and remains at this stage. Guinea benefits from a strong international support to develop transboundary water resource management in the Senegal and Niger basins. Thanks to this support, significant progress has been made in the corresponding sub-basins (Upper Niger, Bafing). This situation generates strong gaps with interventions carried in other transboundary and national basins (Gambia River, Konkouré, Kogon, etc);
- Sierra Leone just drafted a Water Bill (2015) and a National IWRM Strategy (2015). Some provisions are currently implemented: a National Water Resources Management agency and a water basin management board in a pilot basin are being created. Water use diagnostic and preliminary data collection are currently carried out in the same national pilot basin (Rokel-Seli basin).

No systematic hydrologic monitoring is actually performed on the ground. Monitoring campaigns are organized based on demand of economic operators or if supported by international donors (HYCOS in the Senegal, Niger and Volta Basins, DFID in a pilot catchment in Sierra Leone, Norwegian cooperation in Liberia for the elaboration of the Hydrologic Report of Liberia). Most of the monitoring stations are not functional.

The legal provisions regarding the issuance of water use permits (abstraction and discharge) are not implemented at the moment.

During the scoping and field mission, the countries highlighted the need for comprehensive diagnosis analysis of water resources and water uses in every basin. They also recognized a lack of capacity at technical managerial, financial, institutional policies and legislation (formulation and execution) levels.

Regarding the stakeholders involved in water management, local water committees or river basin board / catchment management units (depending on the countries) are provisioned in the national water laws but actually functional only on project or private sector base, mainly in the main international basins (Senegal, Volta and Niger). For instance, in the Niger basin, National Coordination Structures of the Water Users hold meeting locally in the sub-basin to identify issues that may arise. This structure is involved in all policy-making bodies at national and regional level. At national level, countries established dialogue platforms representing the civil society organisations (e.g. National Water Partnership in Ivory Coast –PNECI). These platforms representatives are also systematically involved in policy-making bodies at local and national levels.

### 3.5 Stakeholder analysis

#### AN INTENSE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS DURING THE PROJECT DESIGN

The project components design process, during the PPG mission, benefited from a large consultative approach. A reconnaissance mission, a scoping mission and a site-reconnaissance mission have been led successively in each of the four countries and were occasions to identify and meet potential partners for the project activities implementation. Regional, national and local stakeholders from the national institutions; the private sector and the civil society have been extensively consulted during these missions. All stakeholders provided the project preparation team with ideas, needs and expectations about the project, during the bilateral meetings, the two regional workshops and the Social impact assessment field mission:

- **A stakeholder consultation workshop, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016**, where the stakeholders held work sessions and came up with recommendations for the outcomes, outputs, activities of the two components of the project, as well as for the institutional set-up for the project management and coordination. Their recommendations have been fully incorporated in the following sections 4.3 and 5.
- **A validation workshop, held in Monrovia, Liberia, on May 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016**, where representatives of the proposed executing agencies and the GEF national focal points reviewed and amended the draft Project Document. Their recommendations have been fully incorporated.
- **A Social impact assessment mission**: this mission allowed to gather additional social data in the proposed intervention areas to better understand the social context which the project will work in. the report of this mission is included in the appendix 11.

A key output of the field visits, confirmed by the social impact assessment is that **the presence of the stakeholders at local level is sporadic**. Local NGOs are not so active and not really present on the ground in the buffer zones. Efforts are orientated towards the fight against Ebola. The local services of the public organizations need to endorse and actually implement their mandate, which is not the case presently due to limited resources. This would stimulate the empowerment of local stakeholders and strengthen their interventions on site.

#### A MULTITUDE OF STAKEHOLDERS WITH VARIOUS LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT

The transboundary protected area complex formed by the Mt. Nimba integrated Nature reserves in Côte d'Ivoire (5,000 ha) and Guinea (14,800 ha), the East Nimba National Park (ENNP) (13,800 ha) and the West Nimba National Forest (WNNF) (10,700 ha) in Liberia, as well by the Diecke National Forest in Guinea (60,300 ha) (GEF project Site 1) is characterized by a large multitude of different stakeholders.

The ecosystem and biodiversity management of this complex are under the auspices of the Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves (OIPR) for the Ivorian portions, the Centre de Gestion Environnementale de Mt Nimba et Simadou (CEGENS) and the Direction Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (DNEF) with the Office des Forêts Classées de N'Zérékoré (former Centre Forestier de N'Zérékoré) for the Guinean portions, the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) for the Liberian and the National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) for the Sierra Leonean portions. FFI is facilitating communication between the Guinea, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire authorities to manage natural resources more effectively in the highly biodiverse Nimba mountains. FFI is also supporting the Guinean government in managing the environmental impacts of mining concessions in the Nimba and Simandou mountains: Centre de Gestion de l'Environnement des Monts Nimba et Simandou (CEGENS). They help to improve CEGENS' infrastructure and equipment and focus on developing their technical capacity to limit damage to these highly biodiverse regions. This work is led in close cooperation with the above mentioned UNDP/GEF project.

On the other hand the private sector is also involved in the cooperation with the protected area managers, the most significant are the Société de Mines de Fer de la Guinée (SMFG) located in the Guinea part of the Mt. Nimba nature reserve and the logging company Forêt Forte in Nzérékoré in the vicinity of the Diecke National Forest.

A similar constellation of multiple stakeholders is found in the transboundary protected area complex formed by the Ziama National Forest in Guinea (93,400 ha) and the Wonegisi National Forest, actually proposed Wonegisi National Park, in Liberia (140,400 ha) (GEF project Site 2).

It already exists a cooperation between the Liberian FDA and the Guinean *Centre Forestier de NZérékoré*, they are in both countries supported by FFI and WABICC, further on by PACO-EU-UNOPS in the Guinea portion. The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) is also active at this site.

For the transboundary management of the protected area complex formed by the Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP) in Sierra Leone (72,300 ha) and the Gola National Forest, proposed Gola National Park, in Liberia (99,600 ha) (GEF Project Site 3) there are already formal agreements between the Liberian FDA and the Sierra Leonean NPAA.

Both national parts of this complex are supported by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), on the Sierra Leonean side since many years and more recently on the Liberian side. WABICC is just starting its support on both sides specifically in the corridor and the buffer zones. RSPB has submitted a proposal to REDD+ for further support of the Sierra Leonean Gola Rainforest National Park. The Society for Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL) is more and more involved in the conservation of the future Liberian Gola National Park, particularly promoting community forests in its peripheral zones. This is similar for the support coming from the Rainforest Alliance and the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL).

For the transboundary management of the protected area complex constituted by the Sapo National Park (156,500 ha) and the Grebo National Forest (98,100 ha), proposed Grebo National Park, in Liberia and the Tai National Park (433,500 ha) in Côte d'Ivoire (GEF Project Site 4), too, the cooperation between the Liberian FDA and the Ivorian OIPR, along with the Foundation for Parks and Reserves, has already been initiated.

SCNL, CI, FFI and WCF (Wild Chimpanzee Foundation) are deeply involved in supporting the management of all three protected areas including the corridor between them. A similar practical approach has already been undertaken by the Rainforest Alliance since 2011 including extension services of ANADER and research institutions like CNRS and ICRAF.

Conservation International (CI) is working with steel giant ArcelorMittal to make sure that local communities share the economic benefits of mining activities and are also empowered to protect the natural resources they rely on. Through conservation agreements, local communities will be directly involved to protect nature — and improve livelihoods for local people — around the East Nimba Nature Reserve.

Overall, direct and indirect beneficiaries, mostly in local communities, are estimated at around 3,000,000 people.

The identified stakeholders and their main activities are listed in Table 1. This Table has to be linked to Table (section 6) where the possible involvement of these stakeholders in the GEF project is presented.

*Table 1: List of the stakeholders involved in forest and water ecosystems management in Manor River Union area.*

	MRU Member States	Name of the organisation	Main activities
Public sector	CI	Fondation des Parcs et Réserves	Ivorian Trust Fund dedicated to the conservation of national parks and reserves
	CI	Ivoirian Observatory of	Coalition of environmental NGOs aiming at raising

	MRU Member States	Name of the organisation	Main activities
		Natural Resources (OI-REN)	awareness on environmental issues in CI
	CI	Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves (OIPR)	Extension services of the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development in charge of the management of the protected areas
	CI	Executive Permanent Secretariat for REDD+	The Permanent Executive Secretariat REDD + (MS -REDD +) work to achieve the reduction Gas Greenhouse end of Deforestation and Forest Degradation including stock conservation roles, sustainable management and increased carbon stocks
	CI	National Water Partnership in Ivory Coast (PNECI);	Dialogue platform on water-related issues in CI
	GUI	Centre de gestion environnementale des Monts Nimba (CEGENS)	Coordination and promotion of protective activities World Heritage Site and the rational exploitation of biological resources and Plant of the chain of Mount Nimba and the Simandou and their areas of influence
	LIB	Forestry Development Authority	Sustainably manage and conserve all forest resources including by enforcing forest conservation in Liberia
	SL	Gola Rainforest NP	Ensuring that globally important habitats, biodiversity, environmental services and wider landscape of GRNP are conserved and that neighbouring communities are active environmental stewards of the natural resource base that underpins and enhances their livelihoods.
Civil society	LIB	Skills and Agriculture Development Services (SADS) - NGO	Promoting community-based actions for sustainable community driven developmental project, environmental education, natural resources management, advocacy, human rights and HIV/AIDS awareness & prevention
	GUI	Guinée Ecologie – NGO	Protect the environment against the multiple forms of damage for man to live in harmony with nature
	GUI-LIB	Fauna and Flora International (FFI) - INGO	Safeguard the future of southern Africa's large mammal populations, which had declined alarmingly due to over-hunting and habitat encroachment
	GUI	World Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF)	Promote the survival of the last wild chimpanzee populations and their habitat
	GUI	Institut de Recherches et d'Applications des Méthodes de développement - IRAM	Promote the development of quality coffee sector in Guinea, based on a territorial approach. Strengthen the structure of the Geographical Indication Ziama - Macenta through fair trade certification access to the European market and the development of the local market.
	SL	Reptile and Amphibian Protection (RAP-SL);	To document all Reptile and Amphibian Species of Sierra Leone and Promote the Protection, Conservation and Management of Sierra Leone's Natural Resources for Sustainable Development
	SL	Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)	Education and public awareness, Provide information and data based resource center for conservation and the environmental activities. Biological research and site based action for species sites and habitats. Policy and advocacy. Communication partnerships and linkages with other environmental conservation organizations and agencies

	MRU Member States	Name of the organisation	Main activities
	SL-LIB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) - NGO	Management of Gola rainforest NP in SL. Monitoring and analysis. Identifying the changes and problems facing wild birds, wildlife and the environment. Encouraging everyone to give nature a home.
	SL-LIB and CI	Rainforest Alliance	Conserve ecosystems and promote sustainable livelihoods by transforming land-use practices, business practices and consumer behaviour. Provide training and technical assistance in sustainable practices, as defined by internationally recognized standards, to community-based enterprises, indigenous communities and smallholder farmers.
	LIB	Society for Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL)	Promote nature conservation, support the establishment of a protected area network, encourage good governance of natural resource management and increase public participation in biodiversity conservation.
	LIB	Farmers Association to Conserve the Environment (FACE)	Support smallholder farmers in local communities in LB
	LIB	Conservation International (CI) - NGO	Ci's goal is to protect nature as a source of food, fresh water, livelihoods and a stable climate.
	LIB	Green Advocates - NGO	Protect the environment by campaigning for stronger legislation and monitoring the implementation of existing regulation in this area; Advance human rights by promoting sound environmental practices and upholding the claims of Liberia's rural communities; Empower the people of Liberia to participate in environmental decision-making through the use of education campaigns and the provision of training activities.
	LIB	Foundation for Community Initiatives (FCI) - NGO	FCI works to institutionalize women in leadership positions at all levels and showcase women's ingenuity in building and leading indigenous women institutions that are focused on women empowerment, peace building and conflict resolution and leadership and governance matters.
	LIB	Safe My Future (SAMFU) - Foundation	Promote partnerships with environmental organizations, the Liberian government and local communities to ensure a sustainable management of Liberia's natural resources
Private sector	GUI	Forêt Forte – Forestry industry	Timber production
	GUI	Cooperative Woko	Production certifiée de Café Robusta « Café Ziamamacenta »)
	GUI	Minier mont nimba	Mining company
Research centers	GUI	Institut de recherche environnementale de Boussou	<i>To be determined</i>
	LIB	Rural Integrated Center for Community Empowerment (RICCE)	To empower rural residents to build vibrant self-sustaining communities through peace building initiatives, networking, advocacy and poverty reduction

	<b>MRU Member States</b>	<b>Name of the organisation</b>	<b>Main activities</b>
	LIB	Sustainable Development Institute (SDI)	Transform decision-making processes of natural resource management so the benefits are shared equally. SDI's work aims to create space for the participation of local communities in decision making processes on natural resources and to strengthen mechanisms that will ensure that communities receive a fair share of the benefits derived from natural resource exploitation.
<b>Donors</b>	MRU	AFD	Support Guinean institutional stakeholders in forest and protected areas management
	MRU	GIZ	Support Ivoirian institutional stakeholders (OIPR, FPR) in forest and protected areas management, especially in the Tai NP.

### 3.6 Baseline analysis and gaps

#### 3.6.1 Past, on-going and planned projects addressing transboundary Upper Guinean Forest ecosystems management

In addition to their location in transboundary river basins, the four proposed project sites have been identified because of their historic remoteness in the MRU sub-region. They all hold significant areas of intact and secondary forest, including wildlife populations. The exceptional conservation potential for these last portions of the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem earned in the last decades attention from all kinds of nature conservation organisms active at the international, regional, national and local level.

Since many years, NGOs and donors have supported technically and financially the national authorities in charge of the management of these protected area complexes including their peripheral zones. At all sites, assessments have been conducted looking at the state of the forest and wildlife populations, nevertheless focusing primarily on human disturbances such as road-construction, logging, settlement, agricultural encroachment, artisanal mining and hunting along the key transportation corridors in the area.

Until today the potential of these remnant forests stands to recover, if left undisturbed, and the believed remediable condition of wildlife populations, if hunting pressure significantly reduced, keeps attracting the interest of conservation and sustainable development experts at all levels. They all aim to prevent the decrease of the overall health and regenerative capacity of these ecosystems to a point of no return.

The projects listed below are past, on-going and planned projects promoting similar approaches and/or intervening in the same area. Coordination with these projects will be crucial to make sure the present project capitalizes on the results achieved by the past projects to insure a synergy of action with the on-going and planned project.

#### At regional level

Several projects address the transboundary Upper Guinean Forest ecosystems management at regional level.

- *The Guinean forests of West and Central Africa ecosystem Profile Project* – Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) - IUCN - 2013/2015. In 2013, IUCN (PACO and GSP) and the United Nations Environment Program's World Conservation Monitoring Centre developed an Ecosystem Profile that includes investment strategy for the Upper and Lower Guinean Forests to guide future grant making to civil society groups working in the region. It included extensive consultation process to define biological priorities for conservation action, document the context in which conservation must take place, and identify priority actions for strengthening and engaging civil society in biodiversity conservation and sustainable economic development. This has been done by capturing the perspectives, priorities and capacity development needs of local stakeholders, such as grassroots NGOs and community groups, as well as of government, private sector, donor and international civil society stakeholders. It set out a situational analysis, based upon a review of biodiversity priorities, threats, policy environment, civil society context, and patterns of conservation investment by other funders, and presents a stakeholder agreed-upon geographic and thematic investment strategy. The achieved results will be highly valuable as a baseline for the present project.
- USAID just terminated the implementation of the “*Sustainable and Thriving Environments for West African Regional Development*” (STEWARD) Program (2007/2016). This project was a joint investment of EGAT, AFR, USAID/West Africa and US Forest Service. It was a coherent regional program that addressed regional threats to biodiversity, forests while capitalizing on regional opportunities to spread best practices, harmonize policies and improve regional markets. It began in 2007 as a trans-boundary protected area conservation and livelihoods improvement project, between Guinea, Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone. The objective of STEWARD is to build capacity for increased regional collaboration in biodiversity conservation, fisheries, forestry, sustainable agriculture and trade within national and regional institutions; foster regional policy innovations and harmonization of national policies for

improved ecosystem conservation and Natural Resource Management; and Pilot transboundary conservation and natural resource management activities at selected sites. The results achieved by the STEWARD project will constitute a basis upon which the present project activities will build. More specifically, the activities implemented by STEWARD will be analysed and the most relevant of them could be continued in the frame of the proposed project.

- The *West Africa – Biodiversity and Climate Change* (WA-BiCC) project constitutes a project, which is a potential partner offering synergies and co-funding opportunities. It has a budget of U.S. \$48.9 million over five years from May 2015 to May 2020. Its West African Partners are ECOWAS, Mano River Union and the Abidjan Convention.

WA-BiCC will address both direct and indirect drivers of natural resource degradation to improve livelihoods and natural ecosystems across the region. The project will work with partners at the community, national and regional levels to strengthen policies and systems that will improve natural resource management and the health and resilience of selected coastal and upland forest ecosystems.

WA-BiCC has three major objectives:

- Combat Wildlife Trafficking through the revision and operationalization of national and regional policies, laws and regulations. The program will strengthen national and regional networks and institutions by building their capacity to enforce anti-trafficking laws. National Action Plans and community-led behavioural change campaigns will be developed to shrink the supply chains of trafficked wildlife.
- **Improve Coastal Resilience** in West Africa through integrated planning and the strengthened capacity of local, national and regional frameworks. WA-BiCC will build local, national and regional capacity to generate and use climate information in coastal planning, support the National Adaptation Planning process, and pilot and scale up coastal adaptation strategies that are effective.
- **Reduce Deforestation, Degradation and Biodiversity Loss in key forests** through WA-BiCC technical and knowledge management support. The program will improve capacity for economic planning and development of Low Emissions Development Strategies, REDD+, and transboundary conservation strategies while simultaneously engaging the private sector and supporting frameworks to integrate best practices for the sustainable management of natural resources. **Three transboundary upland forest sites have been identified across all MRU Member States. These are the Tai-Grebo transboundary area between Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia, the Wologizi-Wonegizi-Ziama transboundary area between Liberia and Guinea and the Gola-Lofa-Mano transboundary area between Sierra Leone and Liberia. WABICC component 3 activities include :**
  - a) increasing the availability of information on best practices in mangroves and upland forests management,
  - b) the reduction of drivers of deforestation in key locations through action plans and granting,
  - c) policies strengthening to support improved environmental Governance,
  - d) capacity building for Low Emissions Development Strategies (LEDS) and REDD+,
  - e) development and strengthening of policies to improve biodiversity habitat management and wildlife protection,
  - f) the development of species-specific action plans and map key biodiversity areas and
  - g) the identification of best practices in community forest management to support wildlife conservation.

Most of these activities are planned to be implemented through small grants, which opens opportunities for complementarity with the GEF-funded project.

Gap analysis: WA-BiCC component 3 is directly relevant to the present project component 1 and WA-BiCC component 2 is relevant to the present project component 2. However, WABICC planned to work mainly on the inland forest systems, with little intervention on the production systems, the main source of forest degradation. Although drivers of deforestation include agricultural production systems, WABICC intervention will be limited to development of action plan and the provision of grants with unclear focus about the agriculture.

In term of geographical focus, there will be thematic synergies since both the WABICC and this GEF project are targeting sites related to the same protected areas (buffer zones of the Taï-Grebo-Sapo corridor, the Gola forests, the Wolegisi-Wonegizi Forests and the Ziama-Diecké Forests). Thematically, the GEF-funded project will add value by addressing the decrease of agricultural productivity of land as a cause for inland forest degradation. This will be done through site-specific guidelines aiming at the restoration of tree based productivity as best agricultural practices, training of farmers on how to improve management practices, the improvement of agriculture management in the vicinity of protected areas, and integrated land use plans developed to enable the generation of sustainable sources of income from different restoration interventions. In addition, the GEF-funded project will link-up inland forest inland water management systems across boundaries.

- IUCN, with the support of UNEP and DFID, currently implements the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) at national scale in Côte d'Ivoire through the project "*Opportunities for Landscape and Forest Restoration in the Côte d'Ivoire*" (USD 303,772). This is a holistic approach providing a flexible and affordable framework for countries to rapidly identify and analyse forest landscape restoration (FLR) potential and locate specific areas of opportunity at a national or sub-national level.

Gap analysis: This project is a country-wide initiative to identify opportunities for landscape and forest restoration. As such, specific local conditions will not be analysed into details to enable interventions at the GEF project sites. However, building on the national process, the GEF will contribute to elicit local criteria for forest restoration program and provide support to local communities in piloting the identified restoration opportunities.

### **At site-specific level**

#### ***GEF project Site 1***

The transboundary protected area complex formed by the Mt. Nimba integrated Nature reserves in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, the East Nimba National Park (ENNP) and the West Nimba National Forest (WNNF) in Liberia, as well by the Diecke National Forest in Guinea (**GEF project Site 1**) is characterized by a large multitude of different projects. Several bilateral and multilateral efforts for collaboration and cooperation between these organisms have been undertaken in the last decades, supported and facilitated by many donors and international NGOs:

- The EU/UNOPS project "*Supporting the Operationalization of a Paramilitary Corps of Park Rangers in Guinea*" (PAOCPCN), aims at (i) developing the capacity of Guinean Ministry of Water and Forest, through technical and material assistance, to help facilitate the efficient management, supervision and development of the CPCN; (ii) equipping, training and establishing three 'pilot units' of Paramilitary of Corp Park Rangers; and (iii) developing pilot activities launched at the sites covered by the project: Upper Niger National Park, Ziama Massif and Mount Nimba Biosphere Reserve.

PAOCPCN supports the management of protected areas through increasing the enforcement capacity at the local scale to reduce the degradation of forest ecosystems for poaching, woodfuel harvesting and other causes of forest encroachment. However, this project does not focus on the causes on forest encroachment. These include the absence of sustainable income-generating activities for local communities who depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. The GEF project will build on the efforts of the PAOCPCN through promoting income-generating activities based on the sustainable use of natural resources. This will create incentive for local communities to protect these resources. The resulting conservation of forest resources will have multiple benefits from the local to the global scale including inter alia the maintenance of functioning ecosystems, reduced erosion and sedimentation, and carbon sequestration.

- The UNDP/GEF project "*Conservation of the Biodiversity of the Nimba Mountains through Integrated and Participatory Management*", involving Fauna and Flora International (FFI), consists in (I) a support to the protection of three core reserve areas in the Nimba Mountains which cover a range of ecosystem types from high-altitude savannahs to mid-altitude and lowland rainforest formations plus their associated aquatic environments, (II) improving

agricultural intensification and revenues in the buffer zone and transition area of the Reserve (lateritic savannah, lowland rainforest, secondary bush, agricultural land), (III) promoting culturally appropriate animal husbandry and sustainable management and use of wild fauna in the buffer zone and transition area, (IV) improving local health and hygiene conditions, by promoting complementarity between 'modern' and traditional medicines, and sustainable use and management of traditional medicinal plants in the buffer zone and transition area, and (V) strengthening the management authority for the Biosphere Reserve. FFI is facilitating communication between the Guinea, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire authorities to manage natural resources more effectively in the highly biodiverse Nimba mountains. FFI is also supporting the Guinean government in managing the environmental impacts of mining concessions in the Nimba and Simandou mountains: Centre de Gestion de l'Environnement des Monts Nimba et Simandou (CEGENS). They help to improve CEGENS' infrastructure and equipment and focus on developing their technical capacity to limit damage to these highly biodiverse regions. This work is led in close cooperation with the above mentioned UNDP/GEF project.

The GEF project shall build on the implemented approach and scale it up in the buffer zones of the targeted sites.

- The "People, Rules and Organizations Supporting the Protection of Ecosystem Resources" project (PROSPER/USAID) aims at increasing the number of sustainable agro/forest-based enterprises by supporting the harvest of sustainable non-timber forest products, assisting the development of wood-based enterprises, and fostering cassava-processing and oil palm-based enterprises. It also addresses the reduction of threats to biodiversity linked to livelihood activities by increasing awareness of shifting cultivation and educating about the benefits of community forests through farmer field schools, supporting planting and rehabilitation of cocoa crops, promoting crop diversification activities, and raising awareness of bushmeat alternatives.

The project shall build on the approach implemented in Liberia and promote it in the intervention sites of the other MRU countries.

- The French Development Agency (AFD) is supporting the Ministry of Water and Forests in Guinea through the *Forest Resources Management Project* (phase II). The first component provides a support to the *Centre Forestier de N'Zérékoré* in the sustainable management of the classified forests. The second component consists in the involvement of riparian population in the formulation of the local management plans for the development of income-generating activities in the buffer zones of Diécké and Ziama Forests, including the promotion of integrated fish-rice production systems which implies land planning and management activities and value chains development. The third component aims at providing to the *Centre Forestier de N'Zérékoré* the necessary technical and financial support required to facilitate its transition from a ministerial directorate to a State-owned industrial and commercial entity. The detailed activities of the project are currently being defined. The project is scheduled to start in 2017.

Despite the need to be aware of the detailed activities to precisely identify the possible gaps, there will be room for complementarity and synergies with the GEF-supported activities. Knowledge sharing on the development of local land management plans and forest-based income generating activities will be ensured through the *Centre Forestier de N'Zérékoré*. In addition, the GEF-supported activities shall upscale and expand the income-generating activities both technically (nature of the proposed activities) and geographically (in different areas of the buffer zones of the same protected areas or in buffer zones of other protected, like in the Liberian side of the same forest corridor (Wonegisi and Wologizi forests and West Nimba forest and East Nimba National Park)).

## **GEF project Site 2**

The above mentioned projects also benefit to the transboundary protected area complex formed by the Ziama National Forest in Guinea and the Wonegisi National Forest, actually proposed Wonegisi National Park, in Liberia (**GEF project Site 2**).

A cooperation between the Liberian FDA and the Guinean Centre forestier de Nzérékoré already exists. They are in both countries supported by FFI and WABiCC, and further on by AFD and PAOCPCN-EU-UNOPS in the Guinea portion. The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) is also active at this site.

### **GEF project Site 3**

Formal agreements between the Liberian FDA and the Sierra Leonean NPAA already exists for the transboundary management of the protected area complex formed by the Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP) in Sierra Leone and the Gola National Forest (GNF), proposed Gola National Park, in Liberia (**GEF Project Site 3**). .

Both national parts of this complex are supported by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), on the Sierra Leonean side since many years and more recently on the Liberian side with the support of the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) and the Rainforest Alliance (RA). The Gola REDD+ project aims to "*act as a catalyst for peace, prosperity and national pride in Sierra Leone, ensuring that the globally important habitats, biodiversity and environmental services of the GRNP and wider Gola landscape are conserved and that neighbouring communities are active environmental stewards of the natural resource base that underpins and enhances their livelihoods*". To facilitate the achievement of the project's vision and ensure that the project achieves net positive benefits for climate, communities and biodiversity, project activities will focus on three goals: 1. To strengthen the conservation strategy and effective management of the GRNP and enable the project to be a stimulus for building National policies and regulations as well as informing relevant regional and international platforms of conservation best practice. 2. To enable local people to become environmental stewards of the natural resource base that underpins their livelihoods through education, capacity building, land use planning and activities that enhance the socio-economic benefits derived from the sustainable use of the project zone's forests and agricultural land. 3. To develop and maintain a comprehensive social and biodiversity database and monitoring system to ensure the availability of accurate, relevant and timely information to inform and enhance project management and the effective delivery of outcomes, using adaptive management processes.

The activities surrounding sustainable resource management have been developed in coordination with the villages immediately surrounding the Park (in an area known as the leakage belt) and are designed to improve livelihoods whilst addressing and reducing the local drivers of deforestation. Engaging local communities in both management actions and livelihood activities is central to the project as it ensures the permanence of the project. Activities include developing sustainable farming practices which increase the production of rice, the staple food crop in the region, but also rehabilitating and improving production, harvesting, post-production techniques and marketing of plantation crops such as cacao, savings and internal lending communities to support alternative livelihood strategies. The project is also taking on the development of land use management plans for community and co-management areas.

Gap analysis: The Gola REDD+ project funds are available until end 2016. At this point, the project activities will stop. There is no clarity about the funding perspective in 2017 and possible funds may be availed later, generating a significant time gap, when the activities will be suspended. The present project shall support the Gola REDD+ project to sustain activities during this period.

WABICC is just starting its support on both sides specifically in the corridor and the buffer zones (see activities above).

In Sierra Leone, World Bank and GEF support the *Biodiversity Conservation Project* (2010-2016). Its objective is to assist the Government of Sierra Leone (notably the National Protected Areas Agency – NPAA) in improving the management of selected priority biodiversity conservation sites (CSs) and enhancing its capacity for replication of best biodiversity conservation practices. There are three components to the project. The first component is to assist the GoSL in improving the management of selected priority biodiversity CSs and enhancing its capacity for replication of best biodiversity conservation practices. The project funds services, goods and training (including workshops and study tours) under two subcomponents: policy, legal and financial framework, and institutional framework. The second component is the conservation site planning and management. The project provides services to support planning and management, goods, minor infrastructure improvements, training (including workshops and study tours), and some operational costs, in order to develop and implement more effective conservation management at selected priority sites. Finally, the third component is the project management, monitoring and evaluation.

#### **GEF project Site 4**

For the transboundary management of the protected area complex constituted by the Sapo National Park (SNP) and the Grebo National Forest (GNF), proposed Grebo National Park, in Liberia and the Taï National Park (TNP) in Côte d'Ivoire (**GEF Project Site 4**), too, the cooperation between the Liberian FDA and the Ivorian OIPR, along with the Foundation for Parks and Reserves, has already been initiated.

Since 2009, the governments of Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire have been working towards a transboundary collaboration for the Tai-Grebo-Sapo complex. SCNL, CI, FFI and WCF (Wild Chimpanzee Foundation) are deeply involved in this process and in supporting the management of all three protected areas including the corridor between them. GIZ and KfW provide financial support. This support will focus on the sustainable management of the buffer zones and the corridor linking the entire transboundary forest block Sapo-Grebo-Tai National Parks (EUR 5,000,000). The first component of the project concerns the protection of biodiversity of the Liberian side of Tai-Grebo-Sapo complex. The project includes the following: achievement of an ecological corridor between the Grebo and Sapo forests with an official protection status; and ecological monitoring, improved monitoring and sustainable management of the Liberian territories of the complex by the FDA in close cooperation with local municipalities. Component 2, gathering activities in Côte d'Ivoire, aims at the achievement of ecological connectivity between the Tai National Park and Grebo and Sapo forests. The concept includes at least the following: a strategy for the development of corridors, a catalogue of criteria for the identification of suitable areas, an action plan for the consultation of stakeholders and conflict reduction measures, a work plan for the implementation of a connectivity concept, a management concept including a budget for monitoring and the maintenance of the corridor in the long term.

Rainforest Alliance is also involved in the area since 2011 and works with the extension services of ANADER and research institutions like CNRS and ICRAF.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the National REDD+ Commission (CN-REDD+), within the Ministry of Environment, Urban Health and Sustainable Development, leads the REDD+ process at national level. A national REDD+ strategy is planned for 2017. Civil society organisations and local communities have established a platform for coordinating their engagement in the REDD+ and FLEGT VPA processes jointly. The EU REDD Facility focuses on the dialogue between actors in REDD+ and the agriculture sector, which drives deforestation. The Facility helps finding ways to progressively decouple agricultural production from deforestation. In 2013, Côte d'Ivoire and the EU began negotiations towards a VPA to improve forest governance and ensure that only legal timber and timber products reach the EU market (FLEGT). Côte d'Ivoire is also a beneficiary of the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. An Emissions Reduction Program is under development in 5 regions, notably the Cavally region, where the Tai NP is located.

Finally, the *Initiative for Sustainable Landscapes* (ISLA) develops a specific programme in the wider Taï area in Côte d'Ivoire. ISLA addresses the global land tenure issue. It deliberately works beyond the farm-level to support food production, ecosystem conservation, and rural livelihoods across entire landscapes in an integrated manner. Leveraging and balancing the interests of all stakeholders in each landscape - companies, governments, civil society organizations and others - are key in the ISLA approach. In each landscape, ISLA convenes relevant stakeholders, explicitly including companies sourcing from and impacting the area. ISLA then facilitates discussions about possible interventions in that landscape, recognizing costs and benefits of different scenarios for different stakeholders. ISLA co-fund (together with other stakeholders) those interventions that combine feasibility with broad support from this multi-stakeholders dialogue. In Côte d'Ivoire, ISLA aims to put these commitments into practice and find a balance between forest, agriculture and people in the wider Taï area. It does so by building a multi-stakeholders coalition that will jointly design that balance commodity production and environmental protection and put forward a scalable, sustainable land management model through an integrated landscape approach. ISLA Côte d'Ivoire focuses on the following key issues:

- Forest cover restoration;
- Land-use planning;
- Sustainable livelihoods;
- Developing financial incentives;

- Creating a public-private investment facility for the sustainable and green development of the landscape.

Private and public partners can apply for co-funding from ISLA. A total of EUR 2,000,000 is available to match at least the same amount of partners' investments in activities related to these themes and taking place in the wider Tai area. The Program activities for 2016 – 2020 are the following:

- Prototyping approaches that bring together agricultural production and forest protection;
- Facilitating public-private collaboration and dialogue on production-protection agreements;
- Coordinating regional planning approaches and monitoring;
- Creating a common understanding of (cocoa) agroforestry;
- Harmonizing sensitization tools and messages on forest conservation;
- Encouraging diversification of farmers' economic activities;
- Mobilizing public and private investment for upscaling.

Gap analysis: ISLA does not work in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Building on ISLA approach and expand it the priority sites in the other 3 countries will be crucial to address land tenure issues in the frame of sustainable forest production systems at the Mano River Union regional level.

### 3.6.2 Past, on-going and planned projects addressing transboundary water resource management

Although cooperation in the water sector is one of the main concerns in the region and is discussed during high level meetings (MRU, ECOWAS), the four countries do not have specific framework for Transboundary Water Resources Management. Also, developing and operationalizing a consistent intervention legal and institutional framework for cooperation and integrated shared water resources management would enable the four countries to find sustainable solutions to the current and future development issues in shared basins.

#### ***Legal framework for transboundary water resource management***

On-going project activities: The ground legal framework for regional transboundary cooperation on water resources management is going to be developed by the *Mano River Union / Water Resources Coordination Union* (WRCU/ECOWAS) project, aiming at establishing a regional Water Basins Authority to be hosted by MRU. MRU indeed requested the support of the WRCU/ECOWAS for the establishment of a Water Basin Authority covering the transboundary river basins shared by the 4 MRU countries. Under the supervision of WRCU/ECOWAS, the establishment process is going to be a highly participative process based on an initial feasibility study (Activities 1. and 2., spring 2016). Several rounds of national and regional consultations (Activities 3., 4. and 5., late 2016) shall be conducted to lead to the validation of a legal text, as a legal framework for the Water Basins Authority within the MRU (Activities 6. to 8.), by the end of 2017. The text shall be submitted to a Council of Ministers and a Conference of Heads of States for adoption by 2018 (Activities 9. and 10.). This initiative will be financed by AfDB (USD 500,000). This project, paving the legal ground, shall be genuinely complemented by an AfDB support to MRU for the establishment of Special Delivery Unit and a Natural Resource Unit aiming at providing MRU with resources for regional project implementation. These activities help create an enabling environment to the implementation of integrated water resource management measures at various levels in a context where states are committed to the highest level to cooperate and manage collaboratively their shared resources.

Gap analysis: A smooth operation of both the Water Basins Authority and NRM and SD Units shall however require support for capacities development, **and information gathering. In fact, the anticipated mandate and activities of the Water Basin Authority will be to coordinate interventions in the basin from the four countries and their partners. An effective coordination of the project activities will require competent staff and data and information which the GEF-funded project will be providing. It will produce valuable information of the basin ecosystems and best practices which the planned Water Basin Authority will need to effectively accomplish its work. Overall, the legal framework for the transboundary water resource management, need to be back with strong data and information base, and improved stakeholder awareness, which the GEF-funded project will bring about.**

This WRCU/ECOWAS Initiative for the establishment of a Water Basins Authority at the Mano River Union Secretariat (2016-2018, USD 500,000) is a co-financing partner of the present project.

#### ***Institutional development and transboundary coordination***

On-going project activities: At national level, Sierra Leone is supported by DFID/UK (20 million USD) for a *legislative and institutional reform, the development of the National Water and Sanitation Policy and building the capacity of institutions to develop a multi-sector approach to tackling water sector reform*. At this stage, the project came up with a draft bill for the establishment of a national water resource management authority and a strategy for water resources management.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through the *Building River Dialogue and Governance* (BRIDGE Africa) Project is providing support at regional level to the MRU for the implementation of Resolution number 4 of the 3rd Session of ECOWAS Ministerial Follow-Up Committee which recommended that “all required assistance be given to the Mano River Union (MRU) for the development of a Shared Vision of the Mano and Moa Makona basins, together with a Sustainable Development Plan of Action”. This initiative is financed by the Water Diplomacy Program of the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC).

This regional project aims to build water governance capacities through learning, demonstration, leadership, and consensus-building, in particular in transboundary river basins. It will be supporting the establishment of an institutional framework at basin level for integrated water resources management (IWRM) in a transboundary context to promote joint ecosystem based management of water bodies in a more efficient and regionally comprehensive manner, including communities. The approach consists in the facilitation of a shared vision for each basin, supported by a transboundary diagnosis analysis and an action plan for sustainable development, the design of thematic maps, the establishment of a Transboundary Water Resource Management Committee, organization of Dialogue platforms and training workshops to transboundary water resources management (Activities 5b2.2 and 5b2.3). The BRIDGE project focuses on Mano basin and on Moa/Makona basin.

In the Mano River basin, a priority of BRIDGE work is the promotion of, and support to the establishment of an enabling institutional framework for water governance reform. The project initially focused on the facilitation of a shared vision for the Mano, supported by a transboundary diagnosis analysis and an action plan for sustainable development (Activity 5b1.1), as a starting point for potential development of a water charter for the Mano river basin. The first outcomes of the initiative include an atlas, the new-born Transboundary Water Resource Management Committee of the Mano River Basin (Activity 5b1.2), established in December 2015, and a regional transboundary diagnostic analysis, validated by the 3 riparian countries on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in Kenema, Sierra Leone.

In the Moa-Makona basin, BRIDGE intends to initiate the same approach as for Mano basin during year 2016: facilitation of a shared vision for the Moa-Makona, supported by a transboundary diagnosis analysis and an action plan for sustainable development (Activity 5b1.1), design of thematic maps, establishment of a Transboundary Water Resource Management Committee (Activity 5b1.2), organization of Dialogue platforms and training workshops to transboundary water resources management. These activities will remain at initiation stage though since resources are lacking for a full implementation of the approach in this basin.

Gap analysis: The main gaps identified are the need to fully implement the approach in the Moa/Makona and the opportunity to further replicate it to other transboundary basins in the MRU area: Cavally-Cestos, Sassandra, GreatScarcies/Kolanté, Little Scarcies.

The BRIDGE initiative (2015/2018 – USD 290,000) is co-financing the present project. Continuous coordination with BRIDGE project team will be insured through the BRIDGE Africa project coordinator who is a member of IUCN backstopping team for this MRU project.

#### ***Water resources monitoring and water uses management***

On-going baseline activities: At national level, several projects support the four countries in the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management. Liberia is supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation for a *water resources diagnosis* (Hydrological report of Liberia). In Sierra Leone, the DFID/UK Technical Assistance activities include *water resources and water uses diagnosis analysis at national basin level*. The DFID project focuses its activities on a pilot basin, which is the Rokel-Seli river basin. This approach and these activities could be replicated in the transboundary river basins within the Mano River Union. IWRM implementation and water resources monitoring in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea is strongly supported by donors in the Niger and Senegal transboundary basins (eg HYCOS project). The national sections of the coastal transboundary basins are however rather disregarded.

Gap analysis: The overall analysis however shows that water resources monitoring network is not operational and the gauging is not routinely carried out in the coastal transboundary basins in the Mano River Union. Except in pilot basins, where donors provide supports, water uses are not monitored either. In addition, water users are not aware of the critical environmental issues arising in the Mano River Union.

### **Water resources development planning**

On-going baseline activities: As detailed in section 3.4, the MRU countries have planning documents at national levels, such as IWRM roadmaps and strategies. Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire also have action plans for the development of the large transboundary basins (Senegal river basin, Niger river basin, etc).

Gap analysis: Due to limited financial resources and capacities, there is no planning document specific to the coastal transboundary basins within the MRU area. This constitutes a significant gap that can be covered by the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis / Strategic Action Programme approach promoted by the GEF IW:LEARN best practices. The development of a Strategic Action Programme shall capitalize on the transboundary diagnostic analysis and the sustainable action plan currently under development at the scale of the Mano River basin (IUCN/BRIDGE). It also involves a financial resource mobilization strategy that would be instrumental in enabling the implementation of the identified actions in the existing planning documents.

In addition, as presented in section 3.4, the mandate of water resources management is often under the responsibility of one dedicated Ministry. The collaboration with the sectoral ministries (agriculture, hydraulics, energy, mining, etc.) and the key stakeholders is often very limited. Developing dialogue platforms and consultative approach in the development of transboundary water management policies and action plans would enable the involvement and cooperation of every stakeholders in the decision-making process.

### **Estuarine and coastal ecosystems management**

Past/On-going project activities: UNEP/UNOPS developed in 2011 a *Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and a subsequent Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME)*. The policy documents cover 16 countries around the Gulf of Guinea are currently under implementation.

*The West Africa – Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA-BiCC)* project, presented in the previous section, has a component fully dedicated to management of the coastal ecosystems. The project aims to improve Coastal Resilience in West Africa through integrated planning and the strengthened capacity of local, national and regional frameworks. WA-BiCC will build local, national and regional capacity to generate and use climate information in coastal planning, support the National Adaptation Planning process, and pilot and scale up coastal adaptation strategies that are effective to inland resources conservation and sustainable use. The key areas of intervention are the following:

- Develop Regional Policy Frameworks for Coastal Resilience;
- Support the National Adaptation Planning Process;
- Generate and Utilize Climate and Geospatial Information;
- Address Climate Impacts on Coastal Systems;
- Implement Intensive Site-based Coastal Adaptation Activities;
- Support Regional Communities of Practice and Information and Knowledge Management System;
- Implement Coastal Management Public Awareness.

The WA-BiCC project team is currently in the scoping phase, consisting in investigating possible sites of intervention and in designing activities. Detailed information was not available at the time of the preparation of this project document.

Gap analysis: The estuarine and coastal ecosystems of the Mano River Union area are covered by both a TDA/SAP analysis and resilience strengthening activities implemented by WA-BiCC. The present project shall be incremental in deploying the TDA/SAP approach focusing on the terrestrial transboundary international waters of the MRU area, which are not covered.

### 3.6.3 GEF interventions

The proposed project is consistent with GEF-5<sup>2</sup> focal area strategies for biodiversity (BD), land degradation (LD), and international waters (IW) as it will contribute to the conservation of the Upper Guinea Forest ecosystem through the sustainable management of transboundary ecosystems.

A list of current and past GEF interventions related to the three targeted focal area strategies in the four countries and at regional level is provided in Appendix 3.

Many national and regional GEF-supported projects targets biodiversity conservation and land degradation evenly in the four countries. They focus both on the Upper Guinean Forest and on downstream ecosystems (coastal mangrove zones for instance). More specifically, some of them, currently under implementation, are directly relevant to the present project, since they address forest ecosystems conservation and protected areas development:

- Biodiversity Conservation Project, SL, WB, #2948 (see description in the above section);
- Protected Area Project (Projet d'Appui a la Relance de la Conservation des Parcs et Reserves, PARC-CI), CI, WB, #3533;
- Evolution of PA systems with regard to climate change in the West Africa Region, MRU, UNEP, #3781;
- Biodiversity Conservation through Expanding the Protected Area Network in Liberia (EXPAN), LB, WB, #3837;
- Assessment of Land Degradation Dynamic in Coffee -Cocoa production and Northern Ivory Coast to promote SLM practices and Carbon Stock Conservation, CI, UNEP, #5788

Regarding the GEF interventions related to International Waters, it is noticeable that they systematically target large international river basins such as Niger basin (#1093, #5487), Senegal river basin (#1109, #5133), Volta river basin (#1111, #6964), and large groundwater bodies like Taoudeni Tanezrout aquifer system (#5535). No support was provided to the smaller transboundary basins located along the West African south-west coast. For countries shared between large international river basins and smaller transboundary watersheds, as this is the case for the four MRU countries, this uneven support generated strong disparities in terms of water management at national level. National portions of the large international basins are much more diagnosed, monitored and managed than the other national basins. They even sometimes benefit from dedicated national institutions (eg in Guinea). The present GEF project represents a great opportunity to restore balance in this respect.

The present GEF project will support local communities in developing alternative means of income generation, which will lead to an increase in forest coverage and its related benefits both at the local (ecosystem services) and global (biodiversity, enhanced carbon sinks) levels.

To do so, the proposed interventions will address need for training farmers, disseminating best practices in agroforestry and sustainable agriculture, developing better land management of the protected areas buffer zones. It will enhance local stakeholders' involvement in the management of transboundary ecosystems. The project will also reinforce regional coordination among countries with a particular focus on selected ecosystems. Thus strengthening the regional regulatory framework on management of transboundary natural resources under the auspice of the Mano River Union.

Through its international waters component the project will support foundational capacity building and institutional reinforcement for regional ecosystems management of transboundary water systems. National inter-ministry committees would contribute to development of Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and subsequently Strategic Action Plan. Benefits of collaboration on transboundary basin and adoption by cooperating states in a Transboundary Water Resource Management approach contribute to improve community livelihoods, targeted in component 1, and to address environmental issues. Results will lead to a net gain in forest area (including the recovery of degraded forests) as well as increased transboundary water consideration and management in regional policies. The

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<sup>2</sup> The national and regional GEF Funds allocated to the project emanate from the GEF-5 programme (2010-2014). Delays in the preparation of the implementation of the Project Preparation Grant occurred, what explains why this project is implemented while the GEF-6 programme is now on-going.

transboundary nature of the water resources will also entail regional collaboration resulting in enhanced regional cooperation and community interactions.

## 4 Intervention strategy (alternative)

### 4.1 Project rationale and expected global environmental benefits

#### REVERSING THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION IN THE MANO RIVER UNION REGION

The overuse and misuse of land and water resources in the Mano River Union is affecting the region's rich biodiversity and degrading downstream coastal ecosystems. The indicators of environmental degradation including significant coastal erosion, as well as a decline in natural resources and biodiversity, are becoming more apparent (CEPF, 2015). By some estimates, this sub-region has lost no less than 85% of its original forest cover. Nowadays, dozens of species of flora and fauna within the area are endangered. These facts are attributed to the growing population, civil and land tenure conflicts, large-scale increases in grazing, elimination of forests through expansion of agriculture, forest clearing for residential and urban development, and impacts of extractive industries such as timber and mining. **As a consequence, a combination of climatic, ecological, economic and demographic problems makes the region very susceptible to environmental damage when inappropriately managed.**

#### STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

Individually, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone have, over time, developed policies, laws and regulations to address the management of the natural resources of their countries and to address many of the issues described above (STEWART, 2010). Despite this progress, there is a need for improved institutional capacity and governance mechanisms, not only within the confines of developing national policy, but also to deal with the cumulative challenges posed by land use cluster and integrated water and related natural resources management at the sub-regional level (WA-BiCC, 2016). Addressing these problems from the top down through regional harmonization and from the bottom up through increased participation by local government and community stakeholders is a possible approach (WA-BiCC, 2015).

The project seeks to promote holistic approaches to integrated ecosystem management and to design participatory and community-based strategies that will lead to in-situ conservation and sustainable use of soil, water and biota in the Upper Guinean Forests.

The overall project benefit is to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods for local communities and global environmental benefits for all through conservation and sustainable management of the Upper Guinea river landscapes and forest ecosystems embracing all water and biotic resources.

This project is also of high importance in addressing environmental issues, especially in zones seriously affected by socio-political problems with displaced and suffering populations, which demand support under these very difficult contexts. For this reason it responds to the targets of promoting regional public goods and will contribute significantly to the ECOWAS and African Union's objectives of regional integration particularly in West Africa.

The project seeks to support the countries while promoting a shared vision of principles of distribution and benefits from water, as well as transparent and coherent institutional frameworks. Thus the GEF project aims to strengthen the countries' capacity on water governance, negotiation and benefits sharing and will also promote an exchange of experiences between them on specific issues in each basin in terms of IWRM implementation level.

#### PROMOTING COOPERATION THROUGH TRANSBOUNDARY WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Although cooperation in the water sector is one of the main concerns in the region and is discussed during high level meetings (MRU, ECOWAS), the four countries do not have specific framework for Transboundary Water Resources Management.

Also, developing and operationalizing a consistent intervention legal and institutional framework for cooperation and integrated shared water resources management would enable the four countries to find sustainable solutions to the current and future development issues in shared basins.

The project aims at carrying out a regional Transboundary Diagnosis Analysis (TDA) and creating a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the integrated management of the shared resources in the prioritized transboundary basins of the Mano River Union area and at building the grounds for its implementation. For each targeted basin, the TDA and SAP will be agreed regionally by the riparian

countries, under the auspices of MRU, with specific conclusions and recommendations for each targeted basin. The goal is to enhance the ability of the countries to plan and manage the catchment areas and aquatic resources and ecosystems on a sustainable basis within their territories. To ease the TDA and SAP elaboration and validation process, and to ensure stakeholders' continuous involvement, capacity strengthening activities about the TDA and SAP methodology will be implemented. These activities will address issues such as the limited capacities, poor coordination, overlapping responsibilities, sectorial approaches to natural resource development, and inadequate enforcement of laws within participating states. The SAP is consistent with the objectives and content of ECOWAS Resolutions<sup>3,4</sup>, and with the objectives laid out in Agenda 21, Chapter 18, of the Rio Declaration.

In addition to building the capacity for better integrated water management and ecosystem conservation at the Mano River Union, the project will contribute to the strengthening of relevant national institutions especially at the river basin and watershed landscape level.

#### **IMPROVING MANAGEMENT OF WATER RELATED SECTORS**

Forest adjacent communities and those living in forest corridors in between the river basins and watersheds will also participate in prioritizing activities during the formulation of local development plans and in setting up river basin, watershed and forest co-management arrangements. The local communities will further benefit from business development studies supported by the project to help them identify and pursue economically viable micro-projects.

Agricultural, mining, and hydroelectric potentials will also be vital aspects taken into account by the GEF project, as natural resources are subject to industrial and artisanal operations strongly impacting water resources. Without an effective local organization of water users at the local and regional level, rapid degradation of water and related resources will be the immediate effect.

#### **PROJECT CORE PRINCIPLES**

The project is proposed to rely on the following principles:

- **Legality:** insure the suggested activities remain in the frame of the national laws, policies and strategies;
- **Legitimacy:** insure local communities and beneficiaries are represented at all levels;
- **Promote a strong local communities empowerment** for better appropriation and improved results sustainability;
- **Support MRU in its role as regional executing agency:** suggest a light regional platform for facilitation of the project implementation, coordination of the national stakeholders and steering the project.
- **Build on existing or recent initiatives** and projects on an incremental manner (BRIDGE, WA-BICC, etc)
- **Learning by doing:** select a few pilot catchments or sites where focusing the interventions and later upgrade to other areas based on the feedbacks;
- **Communication and awareness raising** about IWRM, forest conservation, sustainability, etc.

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<sup>3</sup>Resolution number 4 of the 3rd Session of ECOWAS Ministerial IWRM Follow-Up Committee which recommended that "all required assistance be given to the Mano River Union (MRU) for the development of a Shared Vision of the Mano and Moa Makona basins, together with a Sustainable Development Plan of Action."

<sup>4</sup>Resolution of the 3rd Session of ECOWAS Ministerial IWRM Follow-Up Committee which recommended the promotion of three additional International River Basin Authorities, including the Cavally-Cestos-Sassandra basin.

## **4.2 Project goal and expected impact**

The long-term objective of the project is **to provide global environmental benefits through the strengthening of the management of transboundary natural resources for sustained ecological benefits and improved livelihoods for the forest adjacent communities as well as to maintain the intactness of the transboundary ecosystems including the protected areas and their surrounding zones where integrated land and water resource management strategies are implemented.**

The GEF project will base its activities on the baseline projects (section 3.6) that are specifically dedicated to forest management and water resource management.

**The overall objective of the upcoming GEF project is the conservation of the Upper Guinea forest ecosystems.** In order to reach this objective, the GEF project will use a holistic approach in selected project sites, which is based on a common vision for each site and the principle that the last remaining intact ecosystems can only be conserved via the willingness and synergies of all stakeholders.

**The GEF project will consider natural resources management in an integrated manner.** It will enhance policies, institutions, and incentive mechanisms for transboundary water resources management. This institutional framework that will be complemented to the necessary coordination and tools that will enhance, through communities' participation, the management and conservation of protected forest and its surrounding areas. The GEF project will be focused on on-the-ground development of sustainable economic activities to support forest and water resource management and conservation. This will result in global environmental benefits with the overall preservation of the ecosystem, a net 10% gain in forested area (181,800 ha) and improved integrated transboundary water management. Without the project, activities on the ground will continue to focus on a specific sector (either water resources, forest resources or land resources) but not in an integrated and regional manner. The GEF project is essential as it empowers local communities as well as national and regional stakeholders and decision makers in the conservation of the ecosystem through the development of alternative sustainable economic activities that are not detrimental to the environment in the region. In addition, the GEF project will also add value at the regional level by promoting further linkage between the baseline projects through the holistic approach advocated for the natural resources management.

In **Component 1**, on one hand the **development of agroforestry** is intended to restore functionality of degraded forest ecosystems, promote forest-friendly agriculture, generate diverse products and services from restored lands and forests, and protect habitats, corridors, etc. The activities will be based on different forms of tree-based systems to address the various ecosystem degradation issues. On the other hand the **establishment of agreements on nature compliant mining practices** is intended to transform anarchic artisanal mining to more sustainable forms, which provide additional income to communities. Furthermore those agreements undersigned with mining companies focus on mobilizing payments for environmental services with tangible incentives for the development of agroforestry by local farmers.

**Component 2 shall consist in building a consensus on transboundary issues related to natural resources, including international waters.** The implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Management approach at the regional level will contribute to the harmonization of the national policies and the development of a regional strategy for the management of these transboundary natural resources.

### 4.3 Project components and their expected outcomes and outputs

Project: Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) - Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire		
Project Objective: Sustainable management of forest and water resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem		
Component	Outcomes	Outputs
Component 1: Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management	Outcome 1.1: Transboundary natural resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystems are managed in a sustainable manner, involving local communities.	Output 1.1.1. Site-specific guidelines for restoration of productivity of tree-based systems produced to promote the use of best practices in forest and landscape restoration interventions and sedentary agricultural practices in the main production sectors affecting forest ecosystems
		Output 1.1.2. Training systems established for farmers on how to improve management practices to meet certification programs
		Output 1.1.3. Improved management of agriculture activities within the vicinity of protected areas
		Output 1.1.4. Integrated land use plans developed to enable the generation of sustainable sources of income from different restoration interventions
Component 2: Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters	Outcome 2.1: Water resources are managed at the regional level based on transboundary institutional organs.	Output 2.1.1: National Inter-Ministerial Implementation Committees established and operational
		Output 2.1.2: Improved capacities to prepare Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan
	Outcome 2.2: Technical and financial capacity of government institutions for transboundary water resource management is strengthened.	Output 2.2.1: Awareness raised on transboundary and environmental issues
		Output 2.2.2: The regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action plan with initial actions are prepared adopted at ministerial level
		Output 2.2.3: IW learn products generated and disseminated to a broad community of local, national and regional stakeholders
		Output 2.2.4: Financial resource mobilization strategy developed and implemented;
Project Management Costs	Outcome 3.1: The project is implemented	Output 3.1.1: Project management team established and functional
		Output 3.1.2: Project is monitored, evaluated and audited

#### **Component 1: Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management**

##### ***Geographical scope - Priority target sites***

Four transboundary project sites have been identified for GEF component 1 « Integrated ecosystem management” (see Maps in appendices). These sites represent the last remnant forest stands in the MRU area. Furthermore they are constituted of a mosaic of merely intact forest vegetation offering still sufficient habitat for the survival of the last remaining wildlife populations.

A second reason for selecting these areas as project sites reposes on the fact that all the efforts of the national authorities, the international donors and NGOs are combined on these sites to conserve the last remaining biodiversity hotspots while at the same time to develop sustainable land use systems in the surrounding cultivated zones.

Last, each of these forest blocks embraces several protected areas, which constitute the core areas of highest conservation worthiness, and which are linked between each other by corridors or buffer zones.

The selected sites are the following (*see Figure 5 and detailed maps in appendices*):

- Site 1: Transboundary forest block including the protected area complex of the Diecke National forest (GN), the Mt.Nimba Integrated Forest Reserves (GN/CI) and the East Nimba National Park (LB);
- Site 2. Transboundary forest block including the protected area complex of the Wonegisi-Ziama National forests (LB/GN);
- Site 3. Transboundary forest block and corridor including the protected area complex of the Gola Rainforest National Park (SL) and the Gola National Forest (LB);
- Site 4. Transboundary forest block and corridor including the protected area complex of the Sapu National Park (LB), the Grebo National Forest (LB) [and the Tai National Park (CI) – out of the scope the ground intervention].

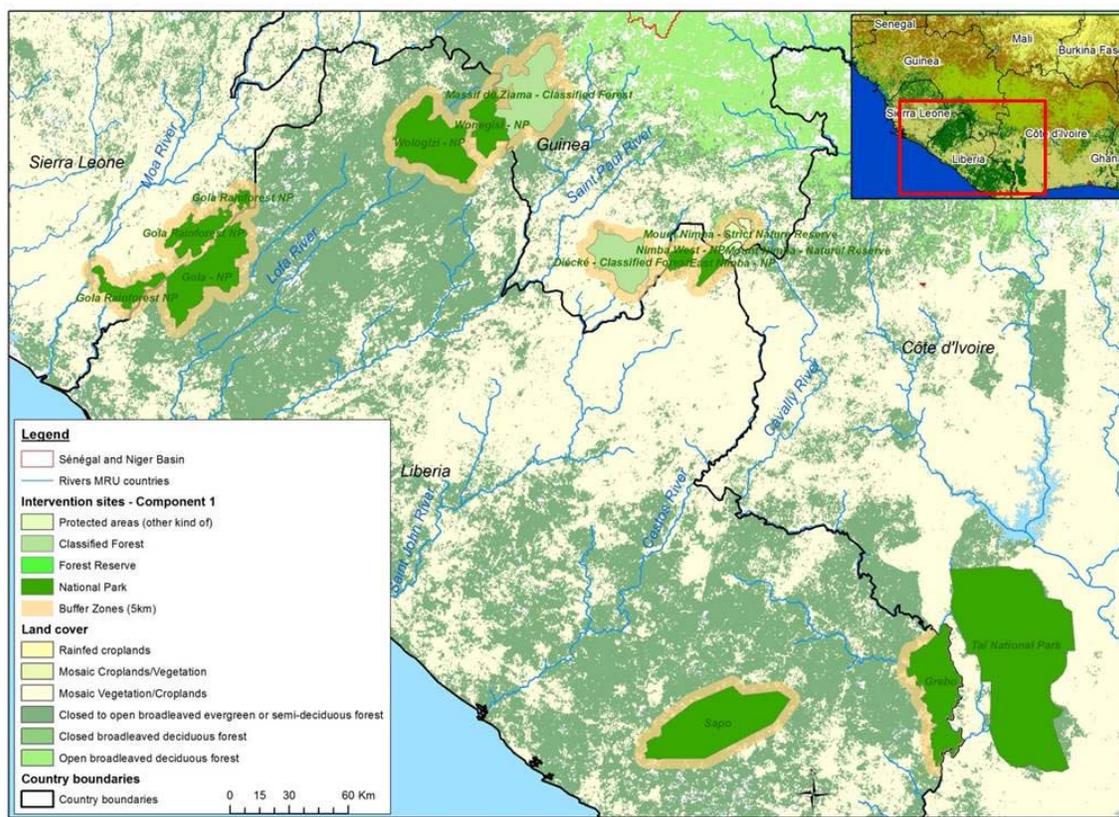
**Nota bene:** The Guinean, Liberian and Sierra Leonean portions of these four sites will benefit from both the on-the-ground interventions, financed by the GEF STAR national funds of the three countries, and the regional activities, funded by the GEF regional funds. Côte d'Ivoire hasn't pledged any GEF STAR national fund to the project. The Ivorian national portions of the sites and related stakeholders will therefore only benefit from the activities financed by the regional funds, to the same level as the other countries.

The surface of the proposed on-the-ground interventions is presented in the following Table 2. Côte d'Ivoire is not concerned by these interventions. The rationale of the assessment of these surfaces and detailed information are presented in Appendix 1, Detailed Table 2.

Table 2: Intervention areas in the buffer zones of the targeted protected areas. Source: BRLi and ProtectedPlanet.net (UNEP-WCMC-IUCN).

		Total	National portions			
			GN	LN	SL	CI
<b>Site 1 - Diecke National forest (GN), the Mt.Nimba Integrated Forest Reserves (GN/CI) and the East Nimba National Park (LB)</b>	Surface of the protected area [ha]	99 600	75 100	24 500	-	N/A
	Surface of the intervention in the 5 km buffer zone [ha]	<b>49 600</b>	<b>34 500</b>	<b>15 100</b>	-	N/A
<b>Site 2 - Wonegisi-Ziama National forests (LB/GN)</b>	Surface of the protected area [ha]	233 800	93 400	140 400	-	N/A
	Surface of the intervention in the 5 km buffer zone [ha]	<b>43 800</b>	<b>27 400</b>	<b>16 400</b>	-	N/A
<b>Site 3 - Gola Rainforest National Park (SL) and the Gola National Forest (LB)</b>	Surface of the protected area [ha]	171 900	-	99 600	72 300	N/A
	Surface of the intervention in the 5 km buffer zone [ha]	<b>73 200</b>	-	<b>15 800</b>	<b>57 400</b>	N/A
<b>Site 4 - Sapu National Park (LB), the Grebo National Forest (LB) (without Tai NP)</b>	Surface of the protected area [ha]	254 600	-	254 600	-	N/A
	Surface of the intervention in the 5 km buffer zone [ha]	<b>15 200</b>	-	<b>15 200</b>	-	N/A

Figure 5: Location map of the intervention areas in the buffer zones of the targeted protected areas



Source: BRLi, SRTM/UEMOA 2011 and ProtectedPlanet.net

**Outcome 1.1: Transboundary natural resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystems are managed in a sustainable manner, involving local communities.**

*Output 1.1.1: Site-specific guidelines for restoration of productivity of tree-based systems produced to promote the use of best practices in forest and landscape restoration interventions and sedentary agricultural practices in the main production sectors affecting forest ecosystems*

- *Activity 1.1: Procure project operation logistics;*  
Engage 2 technical assistants for the life span of the project. Procure their local and regional transport, their technical equipment, purchase vehicles, motorcycles with their functioning and maintenance. The technical assistants will design and implement all project activities throughout the project duration. This activity is essential in order to support and implement all other activities. The technical assistants will have particular responsibility for reporting activities, recruitment and supervision of different consultants hired and relationships with all project’s stakeholders.
  
- *Activity 1.2: Undertake investigation and data compilation on best practices and results from different forest and landscape restoration interventions such as sustainable forestry, natural regeneration, enrichment planting, reforestation, nature compliant mining and other tree-based agricultural practices such traditional and enhanced agroforestry systems;*  
Engage 1 international and 3 national experts for a short term survey: carry-out studies [preferably ROAM<sup>5</sup>] on options for land uses that prevent and or restore products and service functions of forests and tree-based systems, completed by investigations on options for payments of environmental services and their need for negotiations, and facilitate data collection mission in the identified sectors. In a context of rolling back rapid forest degradation

<sup>5</sup> Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology

the specific objective of this activity is to become aware of opportunities for restoration options; including what is needed [success factors] in the project area, as an essential ingredient for the dissemination of viable restoration interventions. Also important is the documentation of potential schemes for payments of environmental services from mining companies acting in line with good environmental and forest-friendly practices. Main outcome is to find out the land use practices that conserve and promote native forest tree species in restored, multi-functional landscapes.

- *Activity 1.3: Identify and establish on-farm learning/production plots to support and strengthen diverse trees components in existing agricultural systems;*  
Engage 1 international and 4 national experts for a short term mission at each site, identify four farmers at each site on free basis for conducting experimental tree-crops production systems [cocoa, cashew nut, oil palm, other indigenous trees based on local choice.] , Support demarcation of the plots, purchase support for plantlets [seedlings, grafts, buds, cuttings, hybrids, or other local choices] collection and running a nursery. This activity complements the previous one. This activity intends to perform on-farm assessment of the possibility of including (and keeping) of indigenous fruit/medicinal trees in existing tree-crop (cocoa, cashew nut, oil palm) plantation system. The objective is to identify tree species whose presence will be accepted into the fields by farmers.
- *Activity 1.4: Produce guidelines for site specific best practices or opportunities for the use of tree-based systems [enrichment planting in tree-crop systems, fuel and fodder woodlots, small tree-cop plantations, tree-crop mixtures, assisted natural regeneration, and stabilized agricultural systems, that comprise a list of native forest tree species with relevance to prevailing certification schemes];*  
Engage 1 international [preferably from Rainforest Alliance] and 3 national experts for the writing of the guideline documents and the identification of suitable certification schemes, hold a regional validation workshop associating MRU secretariat staff. This activity aims to capitalize on the experience and knowledge acquired with a view to disseminate the knowledge acquired (Activity 1.5). It will be essential to produce simple and shared information. The guidelines should be understandable by all stakeholders and foremost by farmers.
- *Activity 1.5: Disseminate the guideline documents during awareness raising campaigns held in cooperation with the main stakeholders;*  
Organize 3 stakeholder meetings at each site and 4 national workshops associating MRU secretariat staff, carry out public awareness campaigns. The project's objective is a change of practices on the ground. It is essential that those records are released at the intervention sites level. If not, all the work done won't be effective: this activity is crucial to effectively disseminate experience and acquired knowledge.

*Output 1.1.2: Training systems established for farmers on how to improve management practices to meet certification programs*

- *Activity 1.6: Establish offers for training courses and promote them via the media to the different target groups like farmers and land use planners*  
Engage 1 international and 3 national experts for the elaboration of the training courses, to liaise with the media and hold a regional promotion workshop associating technical staff from MRU secretariat. The change in practices with respect to forests and trees conservation is a regional problem. It is essential to educate and train the stakeholders up to the urgency of preserving forests by integrating, indigenous trees species in production systems and therefore forest trees. The paradigm shift vis-à-vis the forest is an important step to reach land use mode change.
- *Activity 1.7: Work with Rainforest Alliance expert to develop Terms of Reference to train strategic organisations (Centre Forestier Nzérékoré, CEGENS, Tubmanburg/Bomi Training Institute) on silvicultural oriented new agricultural measures/approaches and their certification principles;*  
Engage a trainer, organize training courses at each site two times every year and purchase the training equipment for each site, associate technical staff from IUCN and MRU secretariat.

Existing institutions do not have the means to operate. It is essential to strengthen them to achieve concrete results on the ground, including one establishing a favorable institutional context for the development of certification systems.

- *Activity 1.8: Provide follow-up training sessions for the main stakeholders and their target groups;*

Under supervision by Rainforest Alliance expert, engage a trainer, organize one follow-up training on the experimental pilot plots at each site every year, and demonstrate farmer managed natural regeneration, associate technical staff from IUCN. It is necessary to prove that the good practices identified are actually favorable for ecosystems and for farmers. The results of ongoing experimental research must be popularized shared.

*Output 1.1.3: Improved management of agriculture activities within the vicinity of protected areas*

- *Activity 1.9: Produce initial maps of tree-based restoration opportunities, prepare reports on findings and ground survey needs. Put in place simple methods to measure and monitor biomass changes resulting from creation of new farms or better management of old ones using recognized biomass monitoring methods;*

Organize every year a combined international/national consultancy for land use assessment and landscape mapping, enabling the updating of the maps and monitoring data combined with field verification / reporting; organize a site specific workshop every year associating technical staff from MRU Secretariat. The production of these maps will measure the reality of agricultural and forest land dynamics. These are essential tools to measure the impact of the project. The field workshop will validate and share the data produced.

- *Activity 1.10: Select and train staff to develop synergies between forest and agriculture intersection and appoint them in the extension services for consultancy services offered to the targeted farmers;*

Engage a trainer and organize a training course at each site every year, associate technical staff from MRU and IUCN, purchase training equipment and material at each site, support park office equipment/material and procure field equipment/material every year. Forest services and agricultural services often work in separate ways. In the rural area, forestry and agriculture are closely linked. This activity aims to strengthen the synergies between forest and agricultural stakeholders.

- *Activity 1.11: Revise and produce legal documents gazetted the project relevant forest rehabilitation areas with agroforestry measures;*

Engage relevant consultancy team as needed composed of 1 international and 4 national experts, purchase local and regional transport, and organize a workshop associating technical staff from IUCN and MRU Secretariat, distribute legal documents with updated maps at each site. For policymakers to make good decisions, official documents must reflect the reality on the ground. This activity should allow better alignment between the legal documents with the reality on the ground.

- *Activity 1.12: Establish local Consultative Committees and transboundary platforms and hold their meetings;*

Organize local Consultative Committees four times every year at each site and hold transboundary platforms at each site once a year, associate technical staff from MRU and IUCN. For transboundary ecosystems are managed properly, stakeholders of both sides of the borders must work together. Otherwise, inconsistent management measures in the same forest block may exist. This activity aims to strengthen cross-border synergies.

- *Activity 1.13: Deliver in situ technical assistance and monitoring over the project lifespan to ensure sustainability of the results;*

Engage national consultants at each site four times every year, procure local transport, support signatures of conservation agreements and MoU with farmers, purchase field equipment/material at each site every year, support agroforestry farmers on a performance based appraisal, extend the technical assistance on plantation and farming improvement systems gradually up to 88,400 ha in the buffer zones of national parks at all 4 sites in the form of community forests, and up to another 93,400 ha improved agroforestry systems in the

buffer zones of the forest reserves at all 4 sites, support farmers managed natural regeneration and farmers managed nurseries.

The presence of the stakeholders at local level is sporadic. The present activity shall support the extension services of the public organizations to endorse and actually implement their mandate. This shall stimulate the empowerment of local stakeholders and strengthen their interventions on site.

*Output 1.1.4. Integrated land use plans developed to enable the generation of sustainable sources of income from different restoration interventions*

- *Activity 1.14: Gather information on human populations and socio-economic economic dynamics to evaluate origins of threats to natural resources and pathways for impacts on livelihoods and sustainable management of resources ;*  
Engage services of Rainforest Alliance to evaluate development certification schemes for tree products and forest ecosystem services. Engage every year a consultancy team composed of 1 international and 4 national experts, purchase local and regional transport, conduct assessments and desktop technical review of permanent settlement, immigration, itinerant farming, economic activities attracting colonists, income of households, infrastructure, access, corridors and proceed with an evaluation of land use options; organize every year a regional validation workshop associating technical staff from MRU Secretariat
- *Activity 1.15: Pilot and sustain permanent experimental best practices to demonstrate on the job improved land use methods with reorganised rural land-use zoning around the protected areas and hold associated planning and assessment workshops that engender recommendations;*  
Organize national consolidation workshops the first and the third year and hold site specific planning /assessment workshops every year at each transboundary site, procure field equipment for the farmers conducting the demonstrations and for the park staff in charge of the relationship with rural communities and the protection of natural resources at each site, purchase premium to support park / buffer zone surveillance. This activity is intended to assure funding of concrete on the ground protection measures in the vicinity of protected areas accommodating particular experimental plots.
- *Activity 1.16: Produce formal recommendations for legal (re)classification and zoning of identified priority forest areas;*  
Engage in the first and in the third year at each site a consultancy team composed of 1 international and 1 national expert, purchase local and regional transport and organize at the end of every mission a site specific validation workshop, distribute the site specific recommendation documents. The formal adoption of the projects' recommendations by the authorities may greatly improve the long term conservation of the last not yet fragmented forest areas in the region.
- *Activity 1.17: Negotiate integrated land use plans in a participatory way with stakeholders and target groups;*  
Organize two times every year at each site specific land use negotiation workshops, negotiate and sign conservation agreements on the development of forest-friendly agriculture/agroforestry, nature compliant artisanal mining practices providing income for communities and the payments for environmental services from ecologically respectful logging and mining companies to local households; put in place performance based appraisals, focus restricted access in zones around protected areas and stop encroachment inside the protected areas, procure field equipment and material necessary for the basic delimitation of the different land use units at each site; integrate community forest management under supervision by the national REDD+ mechanisms. In order to maintain the forest, it is necessary that all stakeholders agreed on shared objectives for land uses.
- *Activity 1.18: Hold Advisory Committees;*  
Organize two times every year at each site advisory committees which will give advice and training on land use choices, enabling the farmers and planters to manage the risks and biodiversity by themselves; advice on eco-friendly tree-crop farming with focus on cocoa, cashew nut and oil palm plantations, and other emerging ones(based on local preferences),

offer joint venture projects with tertiary sector operators ; through the services of Rainforest Alliance promote innovating marketing and certification to facilitate access to markets for sustainably produced products. Investor briefing: promotion of certified products. Communicate on the presence of IUCN as global stakeholder, which can ease the development of an enabling environment and facilitate negotiations between governments and local communities. Help gather required conditions to develop production and certification [where appropriate] of tree-based products.

- *Activity 1.19: Verify via progress and evaluation reports, and visits to the targeted farmers;* Distribute progress and evaluation reports every quarter of year at each site, renovate the visibility of the project (via translation / publication/communication) two times every year

## **Component 2: Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters**

### ***Overall objective***

The main objective of the component 2 is two-fold:

- Strengthening the capacities in the region for the formulation of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the protection and the management of the transboundary water resources in the Mano River Union area (Outcome 2.1);
- Developing a Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses (TDA) and a preliminary Strategic Action Programmes (SAP) for the protection and the management of the transboundary water resources in the Mano River Union area (Outcome 2.2);

### **Box 2: What is a TDA/SAP?**

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis/Strategic Action Programme (TDA/SAP) approach is a highly collaborative process that has proven to be a major strategic planning tool for GEF International Waters Projects.

The main technical role of a TDA is to identify, quantify, and set priorities for environmental problems that are transboundary in nature. In particular, the TDA aims to:

- Identify & prioritise the transboundary problems;
- Gather and interpret information on the environmental impacts and socio-economic consequences of each problem;
- Analyse the immediate, underlying, and root causes for each problem, and in particular identify specific practices, sources, locations, and human activity sectors from which environmental degradation arises or threatens to arise.

Ultimately, a TDA provides the factual basis for the formulation of a SAP but the TDA is also part of a larger facilitative process of engagement and consultation with all the key stakeholders from the initial TDA steps through to the subsequent development of alternative solutions during the formulation of the Strategic Action Programme. The TDA is a mechanism to help the participating countries to 'agree on the facts' - many conflicts are driven by perceptions and removing these can be an enormous step in itself. Furthermore, the TDA should be seen as more than just an analysis of data and information. It is a powerful process that can help create confidence among the partners involved.

The SAP is a negotiated policy document that should be endorsed at the highest level of all relevant sectors of government. It establishes clear priorities for action (for example, policy, legal, institutional reforms, or investments) to resolve the priority transboundary problems identified in the TDA. A key element of the SAP is a well-defined baseline. This enables a clear distinction between actions with purely national benefits and those addressing transboundary concerns with global benefits. Another key element involves the development of institutional mechanisms at the regional and national levels for implementing the SAP and monitoring and evaluation procedures to measure effectiveness of the outcomes of the process

*Definitions extracted from the GEF Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis/Strategic Action Programme Manual – Volumes 1 to 3 (GEF IW:LEARN, 2013).*

For instance, the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis/Strategic Action Programme (TDA/SAP) approach has been implemented in the Volta Basin from 2005 and led to the adoption of a SAP in 2013.

The TDA identifies and assesses three groups of environmental concerns in the Volta River Basin: water quantity, the degradation of ecosystems, and water quality. The TDA also identifies and assesses cross-cutting concerns, notably those related to governance and climate change. These issues are addressed by the SAP. (Volta Basin Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis, VBA, UNEP/UNOPS/GEF, 2013)

**Geographical scope - Priority target transboundary basins (see Maps in appendix 5):**

The overall geographical scope of component 2 is the transboundary river basins in the Mano River Union area, excluding the estuarine/coastal zones, which have already been addressed by a TDA/SAP (GCLME, 2011) and are currently addressed by the component 2 of the WA-BiCC project. The Mano River Union area counts 12 transboundary river basins (see Figure 1). The management of Niger, Gambia and the Senegal river basins being supervised by the established River Basins Organisations, they are out of the scope of the present project.

In 2014/2015, the BRIDGE project supported the development of a shared vision for the Mano River basin. This shared vision consists in an action plan for sustainable development based on a transboundary diagnosis analysis, the design of thematic maps, the establishment of a Transboundary Water Resource Management Committee, the organization of Dialogue platforms and training workshops about integrated transboundary water resources management. This approach, which is completely in line with the GEF project strategy, will be initiated / partially implemented in the Moa-Makona basin from early 2016, still with the support of the BRIDGE project. Therefore, it is proposed that the GEF project further implements the same approach in key transboundary basins in the Mano River Union. The selection criteria are both the prioritization provided by the official Declarations issued by MRU and ECOWAS<sup>6,7</sup> and the willingness to respect an even repartition of the activities in MRU area (see Table 1). Therefore, the proposed target transboundary basins are the following (**see also Figure 6 and detailed and detailed maps in appendices**):

- Target transboundary basin 1: Moa/Makona river basin shared by Guinea 44%, Liberia 8.5% and Sierra Leone 47.5% (*in an incremental way based on the BRIDGE initial activities*);
- Target transboundary basin 2: Cavally river basin shared by Cote d'Ivoire 54%, Guinea 5%, and Liberia 41%;
- Target transboundary basin 3: Great Scarcies/Kolenté basin shared by Guinea 66% and Sierra Leone 34%.

*Nota bene: For the reasons mentioned above, the Mano River Basin is not selected as a target basin for the present project activities. However, the Mano River Basin and the activities already implemented with the support of the BRIDGE initiative in this basin is seen as a key input to the scaling up of the activities in the other basins. In addition, a large part of the stakeholders involved in the Mano River Basin are also involved in the management of the three targeted basins and will therefore benefit from every regional activities (capacity building, institutional strengthening, study tour, regional database, etc). Finally, the regional TDA/SAP shall incorporate the conclusions of the diagnostic analysis and the sustainable action plan developed for the Mano River Basin, as a complementary focus basin of the Mano River Union area.*

Table 3: Area of the national portions of the targeted basins (km<sup>2</sup>). Source: BRLi.

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<sup>6</sup> Resolution number 4 of the 3rd Session of ECOWAS Ministerial IWRM Follow-Up Committee which recommended that “all required assistance be given to the Mano River Union (MRU) for the development of a Shared Vision of the Mano and Moa Makona basins, together with a Sustainable Development Plan of Action.”

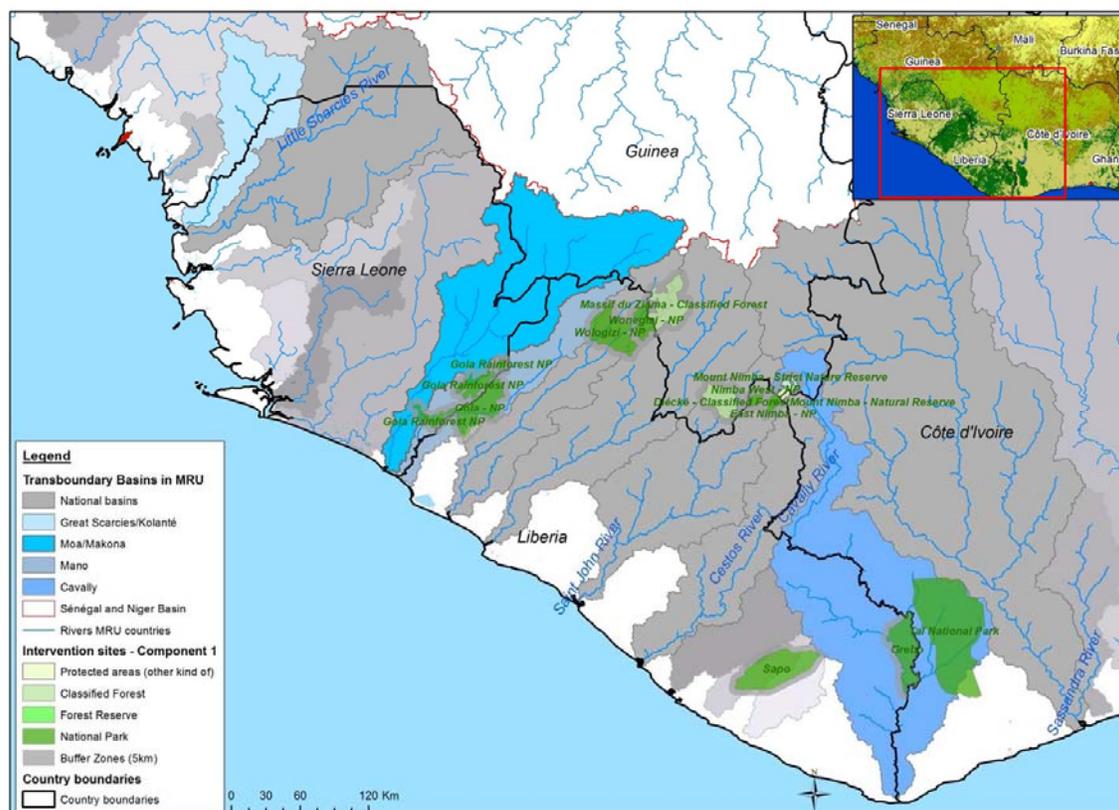
<sup>7</sup> Resolution of the 3rd Session of ECOWAS Ministerial IWRM Follow-Up Committee which recommended the promotion of three additional International River Basin Authorities, including the Cavally-Cestos-Sassandra basin.

Basins / MRU countries	Moa-Makona	Cavally	Great Scarcies-Kolenté	Sub-total
Côte d'Ivoire	-	16 300	-	16 300
Guinea	8 800	1 500	5 300	15 600
Liberia	1 700	12 400	-	14 100
Sierra Leone	9 500	-	2 700	12 200
Sub-total	20 000	30 200	8 000	/

Table 4: Population (number of inhabitants) in the national portions of the basins. Source: BRLi (Data from the UN database, 2010).

Basins / MRU countries	Moa-Makona	Cavally	Great Scarcies-Kolenté	Sub-total
Côte d'Ivoire	-	610 000	-	610 000
Guinea	552 000	72 000	211 000	835 000
Liberia	16 200	334 000	-	350 200
Sierra Leone	627 000	-	649 000	1 276 000
Sub-total	1 195 200	1 016 000	860 000	/

Figure 6: Location map of the 3 targeted transboundary basins



Source: BRLi, SRTM/UEMOA 2011 and ProtectedPlanet.net

**Outcome 2.1: Water resources are managed at the regional level based on transboundary institutional organs**

*Output 2.1.1: National inter-ministerial committees established and operational*

- *Activity 2.1: Organise ministerial consultations to identify relevant members of the national inter-ministerial committees for the sustainable management of water resources shared within MRU.* This activity aims at gathering in each country the ministry (-ies) responsible for natural resources management together with the sectorial ministries (ie agriculture, energy and mining, land, etc) and other organisations from the civil society and the private sector relevant to natural ecosystems and water management at national and local levels in a consultative and decision-making group. A circular will be issued by the national executing agencies to other ministries to seek for the identification of a focal point to participate in the national inter-ministerial committee to ensure that coherent sectorial policies are taken for the sustainable management of the Mano river ecosystems and water resources and that all interest are represented.
- *Activity 2.2: Set-up officially the national inter-ministerial committees and prepare their mandate, action plan and organisational frameworks.* In each participating country, a national inter-ministerial committee will be officially set-up by the relevant Ministries through the publication of bylaws and terms of reference. The mandate, action plans and organisational framework will then be developed and approved by the relevant authorities in order to ensure that they have legitimacy to deliberate on issues related to the project implementation. National inter-ministerial committees shall steer the implementation of the project activities under the National Executing Agency's responsibility.
- *Activity 2.3: Support the implementation of the national inter-ministerial committees' action plans.* The project will provide financial support to allow the national inter-ministerial committees to operate and deliberate as needed. It is thought that the financial support from the project will be enough to cover all running costs. The governments will contribute to the functioning of these committees in making available relevant staff of the involved institutions.

*Output 2.1.2: Improved capacities to prepare Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan.*

This output aims at developing capacities within the Mano River Union, the National Executing Agencies, the sectorial ministries (Agriculture, Energy, Hydraulics, Cattle, Fisheries, Industries and Mines, etc), the civil society organisations and the private sector (Agriculture, Fisheries, Industries and mines, etc), about GEF methodology to develop TDA and SAP for protection of international waters and biodiversity. The activities undertaken under this output will be based on the GEF Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis/Strategic Action Programme Manual – Volumes 1 to 3 (GEF IW:LEARN, 2013). The output will ease the TDA and SAP elaboration process to be undertaken under Output 2.2.2. Generally, this output will be instrumental in strengthening capacities of the newly created water basin authority under the auspices of MRU (WRCC/ECOWAS initiative).

- *Activity 2.4: Develop a detailed stakeholder analysis of the water sector in the targeted transboundary basins.* The Regional Executing Agency will hire a regional consultant to conduct a detailed stakeholder analysis, aiming at identifying every primary and secondary stakeholders involved in water management, using water resources or impacting water resources in the three targeted transboundary basins and clarifying their mandates, their interests (positive or negative) and their relationship. These stakeholders will be involved in the TDA and SAP elaboration process. Such an analysis has already been conducted for the Mano river basin (BRIDGE/IUCN, 2016). Considering that the three targeted basins have very similar physical, social, economic and institutional characteristics compared to the Mano river basin, outputs and conclusions should be capitalized. This activity is seen as a preparatory task to pave the ground for following capacity building activities (2.5 to 2.9) and for the TDA and SAP formulation process (Output 2.2.2);
- *Activity 2.5: Determine training needs of the regional, national and local stakeholders involved in the TDA and SAP process and develop a training programme.* The priority institutions shall be the one identified in activity 2.4 and shall include the Mano River Union, the ministries in

charge of water management in the 4 countries, sectorial ministries, the CSOs and private sector representatives. Draft a training programme for the beneficiary organizations, focusing on the methodology for the preparation of a TDA and a SAP (GEF IW:LEARN, 2013), and capitalizing on the existing capacity development plans (e.g. Institutional Strengthening Plans, developed by WA-BiCC project in 2015). Training segments about key cross-cutting issues shall also be included (gender, climate change, policy influencing, etc). Adopt the training programme;

- *Activity 2.6: Implement training sessions in each participating country concerning the methodological approach and the planning process for preparing a TDA and a SAP in a transboundary basin.* A national training workshop will be organized in each participating country for national and local stakeholders from every targeted basins (Moa/Makona, Cavally, Great Scarcies/Kolanté), identified in activity 2.4. This will provide the stakeholders with the basic skills required for their active participation to the TDA and SAP formulation process (Activities under output 2.2.2). This activity will complement the training sessions organized by the BRIDGE project on water governance and policy formulation;
- *Activity 2.7: Organize a study tour in one other international river basin organisation having developed a TDA and a SAP.* Visiting another international river basin organisation with a previous experience with TDA/SAP formulation will enable the key stakeholders of the project to benefit from their feedbacks. A relevant option would be, for instance, to visit the Volta Basin Authority (VBA), based in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. VBA developed and adopted a TDA and a SAP in 2013. The Volta Basin appears to be impacted by similar environmental issues, such as water quality, ecosystems degradation, water quantity and climate change. Finally, Côte d'Ivoire took part to the process, which would ease the sharing of experience and feedback. The proposed budget has been designed for around twenty key stakeholders in addition to a Mano River Union representative and the RPMU staff.
- *Activity 2.8: Facilitate national training workshops for water governance champions on themes including leadership skills, action planning, policy influencing and gender mainstreaming in each targeted basin (Moa/Makona, Cavally, Great Scarcies/Kolanté), as per the training programme developed under activity 2.5.* This activity shall further expand the training sessions provided by the BRIDGE initiative in the Mano river basin. The training sessions will be addressed to the priority institutions identified under activity 2.4;
- *Activity 2.9: Set-up a simple regional database storing data and information compiled about international waters and biodiversity, during TDA surveys (activity 2.12), to enable sustainable capitalization on the databases and informed decision making at transboundary level.* Information and data sharing is a key issue in the management of transboundary water resources. This activity will enable to develop a tool capitalizing the data collection efforts to be deployed under Output 2.2.2 and will ease information and data sharing between the countries.

**Outcome 2.2: Technical and financial capacity of government institutions for transboundary water resource management is strengthened**

**Output 2.2.1: Awareness raised on transboundary and environmental issues**

- *Activity 2.10: Develop and implement an awareness raising programme on site-specific transboundary and environmental issues.* The awareness-raising programme will build on the outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4 and 2.2.2. It will therefore be based on the best practices in production sectors, the improved management of agricultural activities, the integrated land management plans and the transboundary environmental issues identified in the TDA/SAP. Based on the preliminary assessment carried-out during the PPG, the issues to be addressed will include water quality and riparian ecosystem degradation. A consultation will then be held with major stakeholders including local communities (men, women and youth) to identify the appropriate channels for reaching out the communities in the targeted basins. The awareness raising shall target at least 300,000 people living in the 3 watersheds in which the SAP will be implemented. It shall consist in the publication of materials such as posters to be placed in community halls and other communal locations including schools, community radio programs where feasible and community drama (skits, music and illustrations). The drama sessions shall also be used in schools. Demonstration of best practices including through peer to peer

knowledge transfer will be undertaken especially during community festivals and gatherings where possible. The outputs from these activities will be materials such as posters particularly in the local languages, radio programs and synthesized reports for use in production of manuals and documentation of lessons learnt for future sensitization and interventions.

*Output 2.2.2: The regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action plan (SAP) with initial actions are prepared and the SAP adopted at ministerial level*

It is suggested to develop a regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and a regional Strategic Action Plan with initial actions at the scale of the Mano River Union area, both with targeted basin-specific sections as to priority issues to be addressed and priority actions to be implemented. As proposed earlier, the targeted transboundary basins to be specifically addressed shall be the Moa/Makona basin, the Cavally basin and the Great Scarcies/Kolanté basin.

- *Activity 2.11: Establish national and regional technical advisory teams for the management of the preparation of the TDA and SAP processes in the targeted basins.* National technical advisory team will be established prior to launching the preparation of TDA and SAP. These teams will guide the TDA and SAP processes. They will comprise technicians from relevant ministries, representatives of the water users in the targeted basins, representatives of local communities from the Civil Society, representatives from the private sector. The four national teams will form the regional advisory team to ensure that the TDA and SAP at the regional level incorporate environmental issues of all national portions of the targeted transboundary river basins. Terms of reference for these technical advisory teams will be developed and validated to facilitate their contribution to the TDA and SAP processes. These teams must include members of the inter-ministerial committees. This consultative approach shall foster local support for the preparation and implementation of the SAP. Consultative meetings with local communities in each targeted basins shall be held to identify natural resources management priorities, validate information and endorsement of the approaches provided in the TDA and SAP. It will ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the decisions linked to water resources management and uses with a particular focus on women and poor people who are dependent on the natural resources for their livelihoods.
- *Activity 2.12: Support the establishment of a transboundary committee in the (i) Moa-Makona, (ii) Cavally, (iii) Great Scarcies-Kolanté basins respectively.* This activity shall expand the BRIDGE activities led in the Mano basin and initiated in the Mo/Makona basin. Based on the legal documentation and the outputs of the consultations led for the establishment of the Mano river basin Transboundary Committee, similar Transboundary Committees will be established for the Moa-Makona, Cavally and Great Scarcies-Kolanté basins. The BRIDGE/IUCN team shall provide backstopping for this activity.
- *Activity 2.13: Development of the regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis.* The main objective of the activity will be to identify, quantify, and set priorities for water-related problems that are transboundary in nature, to constitute a factual basis for the further SAP development (Activity 2.15). The TDA development process will be based on the GEF methodology (GEF IW:LEARN, 2013) and shall include:
  - Collection and analysis of data/information at regional, national and local level in the three targeted basins. This include hydrological data but also any data and information about water using and water dependent sectors (water supply, agriculture, energy, agro industries, industries and mines, fisheries, etc). Conclusions of the similar analysis done in the Mano river basin shall be collected and incorporated;
  - Hydrological surveys in selected key sites;
  - Identification & prioritisation of the water uses in the basin;
  - Identification & prioritisation of the transboundary problems;
  - Determination of the environmental and socio-economic impacts;
  - Analysis of the immediate, underlying, and root causes;
  - Development of the thematic sections;
  - Identification of leverage points and formulation of recommendations;
  - Drafting the TDA.

The TDA will be developed at the scale of the Mano River Union, with basin-specific prioritization of transboundary issues in the three targeted basins and in the Mano River Basin, where a diagnostic analysis and a sustainable action plan have already been developed and will be key inputs to the TDA. **Given the technical nature of the TDA, adoption by ministers is not sought for, but the document will be made available to all stakeholders.** The TDA development process will rely on the hiring of a regional consultant team, consisting national and regional experts in IWRM, Agriculture, Energy, Fisheries, Water Quality, Environment, Sociology, Economy, etc.

- *Activity 2.14: Follow-up and support of the review and adoption process at ministerial and regional levels of the final geographically-specific TDA.* To insure a fully consultative decision-making process, Transboundary Committees meetings will be organised in the three targeted basins to proceed to the TDA review towards validation. This activity will build on the Transboundary Committees created with the support of BRIDGE and activity 2.12 of the present project
- *Activity 2.15: Distribute/disseminate broadly the adopted Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis at regional level and locally in the 3 targeted basins.* This activity is dedicated to the dissemination of the priority water-related transboundary issues that will be identified by the TDA. The aim is to make sure that the stakeholders are aware of these issues and incorporate them in their decision-making process. Water users such as mining enterprises and agro-industries, whose impacts on water resources are significant, will be specifically addressed;
- *Activity 2.16: Development of the Strategic Action Plan with initial action programme to be adopted by ministers.* The SAP development process will be directly linked to the previous TDA development (Activity 2.13), since they are parts of the same approach. It will be a highly cooperative and collaborative process among the stakeholders. **It shall establish clear priorities (for example, policy, legal, institutional reforms, or investments) with clearly identified initial actions to be adopted by ministers in order** to resolve the priority problems identified in the TDA. These priority areas shall include resilience strengthening to climate change. It will be prepared at a preliminary level. The identified priorities of actions and the regional planning document shall be further detailed right after the termination of the present project under the auspice of the Mano River Union and the Water Resource Authority to be established (WRCU/ECOWAS project).

As for the TDA, the SAP will be developed at the scale of the Mano River Union, with basin-specific prioritization of transboundary issues in the three targeted basins and in the Mano River Basin, where a diagnostic analysis and a sustainable action plan have already been developed and will be key inputs to the SAP. It will rely on the hiring of a regional consultant team, consisting in IWRM specialists, a Water Quality expert, an Environment expert, a Sociologist, an Economist, etc.

*Output 2.2.3: IW learn products generated and disseminated to a broad community of local, national and regional stakeholders*

- *Activity 2.17: Development of IW LEARN Information products and dissemination.* Create knowledge-sharing tools, such as websites, for the exchange of environmental data and information and lessons learned from all relevant projects in the region at national, sub-regional and regional levels including web-based informational packages, the IWLEARN database, newsletters, etc. The project will connect with the GEF IW-LEARN programme that promotes experience sharing and learning among GEF International Waters projects. Experiences and lessons learned from the TDA, SAP and other processes undertaken by this project will be documented and shared through at least two experience notes and through the participation of key national and regional stakeholders to the GEF International Waters Conference.

*Output 2.2.4: Financial resource mobilization strategy developed and implemented*

- *Activity 2.18: Development of the resource mobilization strategy.* To promote the implementation and the sustainability of the main project outputs (especially the SAP), a financial mobilisation strategy will be developed to cover the funding needs of the prioritized actions of the SAP. This strategy will be used by the MRU Secretariat as a tool to advocate the support of their partners for the sustainable management of the transboundary ecosystems in the Mano River Union area. This activity will build on the funding needs for the priority actions and possible funding sources identified in the SAP. Possible financial mechanisms will be investigated, including private sector, governmental, international donors and other innovative mechanisms, for supporting SAP;
  
- *Activity 2.19: Liaise with key bilateral and multi-lateral donors to agree on a mobilization roadmap for the SAP based on an international donors conference (or forum, or round-tables), and on communication in regional events related to international waters and biodiversity.* Based on the approved financial resources mobilisation strategy, the Secretariat of the MRU will take part to regional events and organise before the end of the project a round table of its donors and technical partners. The objective will be to seek for its endorsement by the technical and financial partners.

## **Project Management Costs**

### ***Outcome 3.1: The project is implemented.***

#### *Output 3.1.1: Project management team established and functional*

- *Activity 3.1: Appoint the project management and coordination units at regional and national levels.* A project team will be recruited to ensure effective and efficient execution of the project activities by all executing agencies. The details of the staff are described in section 5.3 and terms of reference will be developed for each position.
- *Activity 3.2: Procure office equipment to the project management and coordination units.* The project will provide equipment to improve the working conditions for effective and efficient implementation of the field activities. This equipment will be acquired following GEF and IUCN procurement policies;

#### *Output 3.1.2: Project is monitored, evaluated and audited*

- *Activity 3.3: Organise project annual reporting, review and planning including M&E missions.* Annual technical and financial reports will be prepared, validated and submitted to the GEF. National executing agencies will contribute to these reports to be consolidated by the regional executing agencies and send to the implementation agency for submission to the GEF. Annual project review and planning workshop will be organised each year to analyse the progress made and plan for next year. Periodic monitoring and supervision missions will be organised to assess the course of project and collect M&E data from the national executing agencies;
- *Activity 3.4: Organise project steering committee meetings.* The annual technical and financial reports will be submitted to the project regional steering committee to seek for advice, guidance and strategic orientation on the project course;
- *Activity 3.5: Organise Project mi-term and termination evaluations, and audits.* The Regional executing agencies in collaboration with the national one and the implementing agency will organise one mi-term review and one final evaluation mission. Terms of reference for each of these missions will developed to clarify the scope, objectives and expected outcomes. On the other hand, annual financial audits will be conducted to ensure that resources are appropriately used by executing agencies.

#### 4.4 Risk analysis and risk management measures

It is recognized that the key risk to the project sustainability is the **capacity of existing institutions and organizations**. Thus, the project addresses capacity building as a part of its objectives for its long-term sustainability.

Risk Description	Level	Mitigation measure(s)
Climate change impacts at higher than anticipated levels	High	The region is likely to face more droughts and periods of heavy rainfall and the project is flexible enough to function under drier conditions
Peace and stability in the region	High	Three out of the four target countries have been plagued by sociopolitical instability in the recent past. These conflicts have resulted in serious forest destruction and also weakened environmental governance. The situation has however recently improved in the region. If the trend continues and current commitments to biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction are sustained by the regional and national authorities, the programme goals can be realized.
Weak capacity of institutions	Moderate	Institutional strengthening and capacity building will be intensified for the staff of the MRU Secretariat and government staff through the provision of appropriate technical assistance, procurement, financial management and disbursement. In addition, some support to improve the physical structures at the Secretariat and landscape offices will be provided. The provision of continuous support and monitoring by the programme management team will provide rapid response support to emerging implementation challenges.
Lack of adequate financial commitment by target countries	Moderate	The four countries have through the MRU Secretariat expressed commitment to this project. However, given the development challenges facing them, there is a risk that other priorities deemed to be more urgent could emerge during the life of the project and threaten the sustainability of expected outputs and outcomes. IUCN will seek acceptable and manageable financial commitments from the member countries to this initiative. The involvement of other partners will also be sought so as to complement Bank and government inputs.
Project overwhelms the available capacity and skills to an extent it fails.	High	Community based planning methods will be used to prioritize community priorities and allocate interventions with consent of communities Ensure a consistent analysis of local capacity, including the intrinsic capacity for innovation. Propose strategies and plans for capacity building that are based on training needs identified through consultation and on estimated absorption capacity, and that are built on approaches respecting local cultures and while making room for the intrinsic capabilities innovation
Projects become source of conflict	Low	Project will be established through a consultative process and all decisions are made with a bottom-up consultation as much as possible.

Instability of local and international markets	Low	The enterprise development component will rely on the stability and growth of local and international markets for various products. The project will factor in contingency measures for project level challenges while the regional governments will be expected to address the macroeconomic issues. An enabling policy environment for ecotourism development, for example, would be necessary.
Ebola outbreak	High	The outbreak of Ebola, which emerged in Guinea in March 2014, directly affects some of the project areas and may interfere with the delivery of activities and training on the ground.
Invasive Alien Species	Moderate	There is always a risk of introducing non-native species by accident, during processes of restoration. This happens through non-rigorous protocols in germplasm transfer from one country to country. Therefore the project will ensure that during the actual implementation stages, Protocols for Germplasm procurement are rigorously respected.

#### 4.5 Consistency with national priorities and plans

##### 4.5.1 National priorities and plans related to forest and ecosystem management

At the Regional level, the project is consistent with the NEPAD Environmental Action Plan in which deforestation and forest degradation, drought and desertification are priority issues. The project is consistent with the Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa adopted in 2013 by the Ministries in charge of Forests and Wildlife from member countries of the ECOWAS. The Convergence Plan aims at facilitating the development of tools for implementation of the forest policy of the ECOWAS (2006), to respond to the challenges raised by the cross-border aspects or sub-regional management of forest and wildlife resources. The project is also consistent with the efforts made by ECOWAS Water Resources Coordination Unit, for the promotion at regional level of IWRM principles, including the set of guidelines issues from the "regional dialogue on dams" held between 2009 and 2011, which form a proposed Directive on Water Infrastructure Development in West Africa. The Ministerial Monitoring Committee of IWRM approved this proposal in late 2015, which can now be adopted by the relevant ECOWAS authorities and become current policy.

Landscape restoration for better ecosystem management is also consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity [CBD] goals to which the participating countries are signatories. The Aichi Target 15 of the CBD specifically calls for restoration of over 15 million hectares Worldwide of degraded High Biodiversity Areas, including in the participating countries.

At national levels, the NAPAs and NBSAPs called for institutional capacity building to strengthen biodiversity and nature conservation effectiveness and adaptation capacity. The NBSAPs of the four targeted countries underscore the problems associated with forest and land degradation and the need for a habitat restoration strategy to be included as centrepiece of biodiversity conservation in forests and the river systems running through them. All NBSAPs recognize that unsustainable activities in the area are a major threat to the ecosystem functions. In particular, NBSAPs identify illegal mining, poaching, unmonitored, itinerant agricultural techniques (slash and burn, switch farming) that lead to rapid and significant biomass degradation and loss; and logging as major drivers of degradation of forest ecosystem services and water quality. The project will contribute to the implementation of a range of restoration interventions based on innovative regeneration, production, dissemination and use of trees and tree-systems. Candidate restoration interventions [assisted natural regeneration, sustainable management, enrichment planting, agroforestry, etc] will be based on a systematic application of the ROAM diagnostic methodology to assess opportunities. NBSAPs have also identified that the weakness of regulatory frameworks on forest ecosystem and the lack of coordination among countries in that respect, have also contributed to the increase of unmonitored in cross border use of natural resources. The project will seek to address these weaknesses by contributing to improved harmonization and coordination among regulatory frameworks in the

participating countries. The regional level of identification of the project makes it part of a regional effort of coordination for the conservation and management of natural resources. This project will also form part of the network of Sustainable Land Management activities established under the GEF strategic investment program for Africa and will benefit from shared experiences and knowledge generated.

### **REDD+ strategies**

In all of the participating countries furthermore, restoration of degraded forests and other landscapes has emerged as a pathway of choice for achieving national goals under the Nationally Determined Contributions to REDD+; agreed-to by countries in COP21 Paris, 2015.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the National REDD+ Commission (CN-REDD+), within the Ministry of Environment, Urban Health and Sustainable Development, leads the REDD+ process at national level. A national REDD+ strategy is planned for 2017. Civil society organisations and local communities have established a platform for coordinating their engagement in the REDD+ and FLEGT VPA processes jointly. The EU REDD Facility focuses on the dialogue between actors in REDD+ and the agriculture sector, which drives deforestation. The Facility helps finding ways to progressively decouple agricultural production from deforestation. In 2013, Côte d'Ivoire and the EU began negotiations towards a VPA to improve forest governance and ensure that only legal timber and timber products reach the EU market (FLEGT). Côte d'Ivoire is also a beneficiary of the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. An Emissions Reduction Program is under development in 5 regions, notably the Cavally region, where the Tai NP is located.

In Liberia, the Government received \$3.6 million from the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) in 2012 to develop Liberia's national plan for engaging in REDD+. The Forest Development Authority (FDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are the key government agencies involved in the programme. Liberia has been developing a REDD+ strategy, with support from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. The Forest Investment Project (\$ 37.5 M) builds on Liberia's ongoing efforts in forest sector, including grant resources from the Forest Carbon Partnership Fund (FCPF) that are helping Liberia develop its REDD+ Strategy and capacity to participate in a large-scale system of positive incentives for REDD+. This Forest Investment Project will finance investments for capacity building and on-the-ground activities for stakeholders and communities engaged directly in the implementation of priority activities in the strategy. The project components, especially the component 2, are aligned with the proposed on-the ground interventions supported by GEF:

1. Strengthened regulatory and institutional arrangements to implement REDD+;
2. Strengthened management of targeted forest landscapes: This component focuses on improving the management of protected areas, strengthening community-managed forests and community governance structures, and developing public-private partnerships to increase sustainable agriculture and forest-based enterprises. It will help implement the roadmap for biodiversity offsets from mining and support the establishment of a public-private coalition with micro-small-medium enterprises committed to zero-deforestation policies and support investments for small and medium scale initiatives involving specific products such as palm oil, cocoa, paper, pulp, wood, climate-smart rice, charcoal, and wood processing.
3. Forest monitoring information system.
4. Project monitoring and management.

Sierra Leone has recently engaged in the REDD+ process, based on two pilot Projects. The European Delegation in Sierra Leone decided to invest in the 'REDD+ Capacity Building in Sierra Leone' project. This project is part of the Global Climate Change Alliance programme and will pilot REDD+ at the national level and build the capacity of the Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) to implement REDD+. The national REDD+ programme became operational in 2013. At the sub-national level the 'Gola Rainforest REDD+ project' is being implemented by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the Forestry Division of MAFFS, and the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL). This is the first REDD+ pilot project in the country and it will inform the national REDD+ planning and implementation process. This is a key project of the baseline conditions, to which the present GEF intervention will be fully complementary (see sections 3.6 and 4.7).

Guinea has not initiated any national process about REDD+ yet.



#### 4.5.3 National policies, strategies and plans to water resource management

The four countries initiated the implementation of the IWRM principles in their national policies, strategies and water management plans. They however remain at the very early stages of implementation:

- Côte d'Ivoire developed the PLANGIRE-CI action plan in 2012. Despite its implementation is still awaited, the proposed activities of the present project fully comply with the PLANGIRE-CI priorities, more specifically with the following ones:
  - Action 9.4: Strengthen transboundary water management of the shared basins;
  - Action 10.1: Build capacities of public institutions staff in charge of the implementation of the government's mandate about water resources management;
  - Action 10.2: Strengthen technical means of the new river basin organizations;
  - Action 11.6: Define and implement the monitoring of water abstraction and water uses;
  - Action 13.1: Develop a protection system of water resources and water-related ecosystems;
  - Action 14.1: Design and implement an awareness-raising and social communication programme about water-related issues;
  - Action 14.2: Promote and strengthen dialogue platforms for IWRM principles implementation;
  - Action 14.3: Strengthen the capacities of the private sector and of the civil society organisations intervening in the water sector.

However, Côte d'Ivoire benefits from a strong international support to develop transboundary water resource management in the Volta and Niger basins. Thanks to this support, significant progress has been made in the corresponding sub-basins (Baoulé, Bagoué, Volta Noire) as far as hydrological monitoring, water uses analysis, water-related ecosystems protection are concerned. This situation generates strong gaps with interventions carried in other transboundary and national basins (Comoé, Cavally, Sassandra, etc). The proposed activities fully comply with the PLANGIRE provisions and will enable to implement IWRM activities that were under developed in the targeted basin (Cavally).

- Liberia developed a National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy in 2009. Institutional recommendations, water management organization and planning orientations have not been implemented yet. Liberia is supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation for a water resources diagnosis (Hydrological report of Liberia). The proposed component 2 is in line with the national policy priorities, and particularly with the following ones:
  - Priority 1. Foster our vision of efficiently integrating and managing Liberia's water resources for sustainability and development;
  - Priority 3. Create a governing body for sustained water and sanitation management in Liberia to ensure full social and economic benefits;
  - Priority 4. Ensure capacity building for water resources management and execution of the unified state policy on use and protection of water resources both at national and international levels
- Guinea developed an IWRM road map (2011) and remains at this stage. Guinea benefits from a strong international support to develop transboundary water resource management in the Senegal and Niger basins. Thanks to this support, significant progress has been made in the corresponding sub-basins (Upper Niger, Bafing), as far as hydrological monitoring, water uses analysis, water-related ecosystems protection are concerned. The proposed activities fully comply with the road map provisions, especially with the following priorities:
  - Priority 1. Define a shared vision for integrated water resource management and propose strategic actions ;
  - Priority 5. Broadly involve water users and every stakeholders to the concertation and decision making process;
  - Priority 6. Strengthen interministerial coordination about national water strategies;
  - Priority 7. Establish a dialogue platform to develop IWRM management plans;
  - Priority 10. Adapt sectoral policies to water resource management plans;
  - Priority 11. Provide data and capacities to inform the decision making process related to IWRM.

The proposed project will enable to implement IWRM activities that were under developed in the targeted basins (Kolenté, Makona, Cavally).

- Sierra Leone just drafted a Water Bill (2015) and a National IWRM Strategy (2015). Some provisions are currently implemented: a National Water Resources Management agency and a water basin management board in a pilot basin are being created. Water use diagnostic and preliminary data collection are currently carried out in the same national pilot basin (Rokel-Seli basin). These actions are directly in line with the proposed activities. Component 2 will provide support to SL for implementing the same approach (TDA, SAP, etc) in other basins (Great Scarcies, Moa) where such actions, despite provisioned, have not been initiated yet.

#### 4.5.4 Project alignment with national poverty reduction strategies

At the African level, this program responds to the objectives of promoting regional public goods and will contribute significantly to the ECOWAS and African Union's objectives of regional integration particularly in West Africa. It will contribute directly to the management of transboundary natural resources and protected areas of Mano River Union (MRU) member states as stipulated in their 2012-2022 Strategic Plan. At the national levels the project is fully aligned with the PRSP of the MRU countries:

- Cote d'Ivoire PRSP (2012-2015, *still valid*) has a key pillar (Strategic Orientation 4) for the improvement of the accessibility and quality of basic services, environmental protection, promotion of gender equality and social protection. The expected outcome of the pillar is ensuring welfare for all, including protection of the environment. The targeted forest ecosystems in the country are facing various threats as a result of land use changes, civil conflicts that have led to the displacement of persons, and unsustainable extraction of timber and minerals.
- In Guinea, the PRSP (2012) has a pillar on promotion of sustainable development within which sustainable and rational use of forests and protected areas is articulated. The MARFOP contributes to this pillar through sustainable agricultural production, sustainable management of forests, and increase in incomes for rural communities. The Bank's assistance to Guinea seeks to strengthen regional integration. The Guinea Results Based Country Strategy Paper (2005-2009) is based on the Country's PRSP that was adopted in 2002. The Bank Group's interventions are based on the strategic guidelines of the PRSP and concentrate on two pillars: (i) reinforcement of basic infrastructure and growth sectors; and (ii) improvement of basic social services.
- Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy (2008-2011, *still valid*) comprises four pillars – (i) consolidating peace and security, (ii) revitalizing the economy (iii) strengthening governance and the rule of law, and (iv) rehabilitating infrastructure and delivering basic services. Forestry and rural development interventions contribute to pillar 2. The central goal for forestry is for the sub-sector to become a source of higher incomes for the rural population, ensure that benefits are shared equitably, and provide adequate safeguards to ensure sustainability.
- Sierra Leone's PRSP II (2008-2012, *still valid*) has four main priority areas which include: (i) promoting provision of a reliable power supply, (ii) raising quantity and value added productivity in agriculture and fisheries, (iii) developing a national transportation network, and (iv) ensuring sustainable human development. The attainment of these priorities evidently requires the attainment of core preconditions in terms of good governance, macro-economic stability, private sector development, and sustainable natural resource management. Liberia and Sierra Leone have made important policy commitments to forest ecosystems conservation as evidenced by the setting aside of the Gola Forest as a transboundary Peace Park in 2009. IUCN defines a Peace Park as a transboundary protected area that is formally dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and to the promotion of peace and cooperation.

#### 4.6 Project alignment with [IUCN Programme](#)

IUCN's mission is "To influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable." In doing so, IUCN envisions "A just world that values and conserves nature". It has been operating this through quadrennial programming. The IUCN's programs for 2013-2016 and 2017-2020 are focusing on: (i) expanding efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and link-up with efforts for poverty reduction and sustainable development; (ii) developing and promoting nature-based solutions to global, regional and local development challenges, providing tangible livelihood benefits and conserving biodiversity and (iii) supporting and influencing the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan of the Convention of Biological Diversity and the Sustainable Development Goals.

IUCN work is organized around three programme areas: Valuing and conserving nature; effective and equitable governance of nature's use and Deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development. To achieve results, IUCN develops and uses its science-based knowledge on biodiversity, and tools and planning standards, to influence policy and action on the ground.

IUCN is therefore well positioned to avail to the four countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia) and the Secretariat of the Mano River union its vast best practice experience and lessons learnt in implementing similar projects in West Africa context. In fact, since 1983, IUCN and WWF have assisted the government of Liberia with the identification of the priority conservation areas and actions of the tropical rain forest, focusing on wildlife conservation and national parks. . Since 2006, IUCN together with FAO, supported ECOWAS Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources in the elaboration of a Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa adopted in 2013 by the Ministries in charge of Forests and Wildlife. Since 2009, IUCN also supported the ECOWAS Water Resources Coordination Unit in a regional dialogue on the development of large water infrastructure projects in the ECOWAS area known as "dialogue on dams", which key outcome is a proposed Directive on Water Infrastructure Development in West Africa. The Ministerial Monitoring Committee of IWRM approved this proposal in late 2015. Over the past decade, IUCN has been involved in the four countries to improve their forest ecosystems and international water governance and management systems. This involvement includes the establishment of the local transboundary committees for the management of the Mano River water resources in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. In addition, works are on-going to promote equitable and effective governance of water resources in the Mano river basin (BRIDGE Initiative). Other supports are also being provided to Guinea to promote the integrated management of ecosystems alongside the Niger basin, while in Cote d'Ivoire, national parks such as Tai NP received technical assistance to improve the management effectiveness.

The proposed project "Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management" which aims the conservation of the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem, is well aligned with IUCN programme area on (1) valuing and conserving nature and (2) effective and equitable governance of nature's use. Under the first programme area, IUCN will make available credible and trusted knowledge for valuing and conserving biodiversity leads to better policy and action on the ground. Under the second programme area, IUCN will promote improved governance arrangements over natural resources in order to deliver rights-based and equitable conservation with tangible livelihoods benefits. The proposed project is aligned with the IUCN third programme area which is "deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development". Under this area, IUCN focuses on approaches to "healthy and restored ecosystems make cost-effective contributions to meeting global challenges of climate change, food security and economic and social development". These approaches include capacity development, knowledge generation on best practices, the creation of a robust set of principles, standards and tools, consolidating what already exists, and convening and empowering stakeholders to design solutions that influence policy, governance and action. Thus, this project will build on lessons learnt from and complement the abovementioned IUCN-led initiatives by providing resources to support incremental cost, taking into account what other organizations are doing in the target countries.

#### 4.7 Incremental cost reasoning (for GEF projects)

<u>Business as usual scenario</u>	<u>Alternative scenario with the GEF resources</u>
<b>Component 1: Integrated Ecosystem Management</b>	
<p>The complexity in the institutional configuration in the forest and environment sector in the MRU Member States, as outlined in chapter 3.6, make the integrated management of transboundary ecosystems fairly difficult and demands high level of coordination.</p> <p>Presently, there is no regional coordination framework, but the establishment of dialogue platforms is under discussion at MRU and ECOWAS. The present GEF project is prepared to fill this gap and to contribute to develop and to support the functioning of this future framework. This intervention would be additional to that intended by WABICC in the next 5 years. Synergies of both projects, GEF and WABICC, can be obtained by the coordination of their activity schedules on behalf of the reinforcement of the management capacities of the MRU Secretariat.</p> <p>At the national level, several projects support the four countries in the site specific implementation of integrated ecosystem management. It is important to notice that the last remaining contiguous forest blocks of the Upper Guinean Forest are generally transboundary and the respective protected areas inside these blocks need cross-border coordination for their management. This necessity for coordination of cross-border management measures on the sites level has already been considered by the local stakeholders for a long time. Accordingly cooperation of the different projects on both sides of a border has been developed in the majority of the cases. The leading momentum for transboundary integrated ecosystem management is actually coming from the site specific engaged projects and programs, implemented through NGOs and park staff working in the field and the local administration posts.</p>	<p>For a better understanding of the ongoing evolutionary trends and the decision making for the steering of the future project activities, the GEF funds will be used to build a comprehensive database on best practices in activities related to the different production sectors that threaten the forest ecosystem.</p> <p>In addition, the GEF funds for this component will allow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To focus interventions on transboundary landscapes, around classified forests and protected areas.</li> <li>- To develop and test on an experimental scale innovative sustainable land use systems that are adapted to and compatible with the original forest ecosystem;</li> <li>- To produce and disseminate guidelines for site-specific best practices for evaluating and restoring degraded forest and landscapes;</li> <li>- To establish training courses on improved management practices and to offer them to target groups of farmers and forest managers;</li> <li>- To appoint trained staff in the extension services in the protected areas and to offer consultancy services and advice to target groups of farmers in the vicinity of protected areas;</li> <li>- To establish in a participatory way integrated land use plans enabling the generation of sustainable income from tree products and services; including through certification schemes while seeking to reduce the risk of land tenure conflicts.</li> <li>- To implement these activities in a transboundary manner, gathering the local national and regional stakeholders from the all the concerned countries at each site.</li> </ul> <p>The GEF inputs will link up with the sectoral strategies and all relevant national policies and international conventions. They will support and maintain processes to establish multilateral cooperation with and between other environmental and socio-economic projects that intervene at the same sites.</p> <p>These kind of synergies and opportunities of co-funding are particularly interesting with partner organisations (WABICC, GIZ; AfD, KfW and international NGOs) of the MRU Secretariat and the national implementation agencies like FDA, NPAA, OIPR and others.</p> <p>The upcoming GEF project is destined to integrate, enlarge and strengthen these collaborative engagements and to move in with its funds.</p> <p>From the conservation point of view, the participation of the GEF project will increase the efforts to develop</p>

<b><u>Business as usual scenario</u></b>	<b><u>Alternative scenario with the GEF resources</u></b>
	<p>appropriate and diverse tree based systems in the buffer zones around protected areas and in the surroundings of the water sources at the head of the river basins. Whereas most of the identified current projects target the protected areas and very few target their buffer zones, the GEF supported activities will specifically address these buffer zones, allowing to fill this gap. In this respect, the GEF funding will be incremental with funding of FFI and CI funding in the Mt Nimba-Diecke site, with that of FFI and WABICC at the Ziama-Wonegesi site, with that of RSPB, REDD+, WABICC , SCNL and CSSL at the Gola corridor site, and with that of WCF, FFI, CI, SCNL, GIZ/KfW and WABICC at the Grebo-Tai corridor site. The execution, monitoring and steering of the management measures concerning the new tree-based systems including various forms of agroforestry and community forest systems would be delegated to specialized local NGOs already implicated in such undertakings (as CI, FFI, Rainforest Alliance for instance).</p> <p>Under a socio-economic perspective, the GEF project will provide the means to enhance the participative development of local land use plans which include the whole array of social and environmental issues. It will be additional to the support of CEPF, PROSPER, FFI and CI in the Mt Nimba-Diecke site, and would collaborate there with the private sector represented by SMFG in the Mt. Nimba nature reserve and Forêt Forte in and around the Diecke National Forest. At the other sites the GEF project will be complementary with the same stakeholders already mentioned above, the incremental reasoning is that complementary sample plots in the same area allow an upscaling of the experimental basis for further planning and decision making.</p> <p>Finally, the GEF project related approach favours the facilitation of a shared vision for the conservation of each cross-border block of forest ecosystems, based on a Transboundary Diagnosis Analysis (TDA) and a management plan for forest conservation and sustainable development, the design of thematic maps, the establishment of a Transboundary Protected area Management Committee, organization of Dialogue platforms and training workshops to transboundary integrated ecosystem management. The GEF intervention / funding in the domain of protected area staff training is incremental with that of PAOCPN-EU-UNOPS that intervenes in all Guinean portions of the project sites.</p>
<p><u>Co-financing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WA-BiCC project: USD 6,630,000;</li> <li>- ROAM-CI/IUCN-UNEP-DFID: USD 307,772;</li> <li>- FDA/LB: USD 200,000.</li> </ul>	<p><u>GEF funds:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional SFM funds: USD 1,050,000;</li> <li>- National BD/LD STAR funds: GN, USD 1,050,000; LB, USD 1,050,000; SL: USD 1,050,000.</li> </ul>
<b>Component 2: Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters</b>	
<p>The ground legal framework for regional transboundary cooperation on water resources management is going to be developed by the Mano</p>	<p>It is proposed that the GEF project further implement the same technical approach than the one implemented by the BRIDGE initiative in additional</p>

<b>Business as usual scenario</b>	<b>Alternative scenario with the GEF resources</b>
<p>River Union / Water Resources Coordination Union (WRCU/ECOWAS) project, aiming at establishing a regional Water Basins Authority to be hosted by MRU.</p> <p>IUCN, through the BRIDGE initiative, will be supporting the establishment of an institutional framework at basin level for integrated water resources management (IWRM) in a transboundary context to promote joint ecosystem based management of water bodies in a more efficient and regionally comprehensive manner, including communities. The approach consists in the facilitation of a shared vision for each basin, supported by a transboundary diagnosis analysis and an action plan for sustainable development, the design of thematic maps, the establishment of a Transboundary Water Resource Management Committee, organization of Dialogue platforms and training workshops to transboundary water resources management. This approach has been implemented in the Mano river basin and is currently initiated in Moa-Makona Basin, and is however lacking resources to be sustained. Funds are indeed not fully provisioned for the implementation of the following activities in the Moa/Makona basin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Activity 5B1.1: Support the development of the Sustainable Development Action Plan taking including the Makona Moa basin</li> <li>- Activity 5B1.2: Support the establishment of a transboundary committee in the Moa-Makona sub basin</li> <li>- Activity 5B2.1: Support to the MRU to develop and disseminate at least five new thematic maps and an Atlas and use them as a basis for dialogue on water cooperation</li> <li>- Activity 5B2.2: Organise at least one annual training workshop for local stakeholders, including platform and transboundary committee members, and champions, on sustainable water management using BRIDGE tools</li> <li>- Activity 5B2.3: Facilitate one annual training workshop for water governance champions on themes including leadership skills, action planning and policy influencing</li> </ul> <p>Sierra Leone is supported by DFID/UK (20 million USD) for the legislative reform, the development of the National Water and Sanitation Policy and building the capacity of institutions to develop a multi-sector approach to tackling water sector reform. The project activities include water resources and water uses diagnosis analysis at national basin level (Rokel-Seli river basin).</p> <p>Liberia is supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation for a water resources diagnosis (Hydrological report of Liberia).</p>	<p>prioritized transboundary basins in the Mano River Union. The selection criteria of these additional basins are both the prioritization provided by the official Declarations issued by MRU and ECOWAS<sup>5,6</sup> and the willingness to respect an even repartition of the activities in MRU area (see Table 2). Therefore, in addition to the Mano River Basin, targeted by BRIDGE, the proposed target transboundary basins are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Target transboundary basin 1: Moa/Makona river basin shared by Guinea 44%, Liberia 8.5% and Sierra Leone 47.5% (<i>in an incremental way based on the BRIDGE initial activities</i>);</li> <li>- Target transboundary basin 2: Cavally river basin shared by Cote d'Ivoire 54%, Guinea 5%, and Liberia 41%;</li> <li>- Target transboundary basin 3: Great Scarcies/Kolenté basin shared by Guinea 66% and Sierra Leone 34%.</li> </ul> <p>The GEF funding for this component will allow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Strengthening capacities in the region to develop the TDA and the SAP including an estimation of financial resources required for implementation and a strategy to mobilize these resources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National inter-ministry committees Environmental working groups from the MRU countries will be established and equipped with skills to prepare and implement the SAP</li> <li>- Existing mechanisms for regional cooperation in regional, national and local bodies will be mapped and strengthened.</li> <li>- Data and information in international waters and biodiversity, focusing on regional and transboundary issues, will be created for decision making</li> <li>- Participatory planning mechanism for TDA/SAP formulation</li> <li>- Training, coordination meetings, and study tours aimed at knowledge sharing with regions possessing similar social, economic, political and environmental conditions that have addressed development and environment problems.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>This first cluster of activities shall complement what BRIDGE will have initiated through its activities 5B2.1 to 5B2.3.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(ii) Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Actions Programs are prepared and adopted at the ministerial level</li> </ol> <p>The TDA will investigate the sector activities and practices that negatively impact the water resources and biodiversity in the region including a root cause analysis. This will provide a holistic diagnostic which is currently missing in every basin, except in Mano. The SAP will elaborate on measures to ensure sustainable development within the Moa-Makona, Cavally, Great</p>

<b><u>Business as usual scenario</u></b>	<b><u>Alternative scenario with the GEF resources</u></b>
<p>IWRM implementation in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea is supported by donors mainly in the Niger and Senegal transboundary basins, the national sections of the coastal transboundary basins are rather disregarded in these two countries.</p>	<p>Scarcies/Kolenté River Basins through the use of natural resources while protecting the environment. The SAP-related activities will be complementary to the activity 5B1.1. The GEF resources will be used to build a comprehensive database on the transboundary waters in these basins informed by detailed environmental studies and information systems analysis. The database will form part of the SAP. The SAP will also include estimates of the financial resources required for implementation and a resource mobilization strategy.</p> <p>The GEF inputs will link up with the Moa-Makona/Cavally/Great Scarcies-Kolenté River Natural Resources Management Plan by building positive livelihood links that will promote protection and sustainable use of the ecosystems resources. It will also contribute to improved land use activities in community lands in the forest adjacent areas. The GEF funded SAP will thus be the basis for a future Water Resources Management Plan in these basins.</p> <p>The objective is to expand IUCN BRIDGE approach to further develop multilateral cooperation between the Mano River Union States, which will ensure effective conservation and management of the Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation areas and other high priority areas in order to improve the livelihoods of populations within the zone. In that respect, the component will be additional to the BRIDGE activity 5B1.2. The activities will also be additional to the surveys led in the Rokel-Selil basin in Sierra Leone, expanding the surveys to the transboundary basins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional studies, at the Moa-Makona/Cavally/Great Scarcies-Kolenté rivers level, to assess the impact of economic growth on important environmental resources in the region will be undertaken. The aspects considered will be : environmental trends, problems, and solutions and requirements for protecting the environment.</li> <li>- Thematic studies on the impact of sub-sectors - such as mining or logging- on the environment will be undertaken. The theme will be defined in a participatory manner.</li> <li>- The TDA will be formally reviewed and adopted at the ministerial level and it will include (i) a detailed identification of the environmental trends issues and concerns; (ii) a transboundary analysis; the extent to which these are transboundary; and (iii) root causes of the issues and concerns and (iv) preliminary recommendations.</li> <li>- The SAP formulation will build on the analysis carried out in the TDA and identify priority actions &amp; investments. As for the previous studies and for the TDA, the SAP will be reviewed and adopted at ministerial level. The SAP will include a financial resource mobilization strategy that will facilitate its implementation.</li> <li>- The studies, the TDA and the SAP will be adequately coordinated and harmonized with internal and external stakeholders activities, to ensure (i) a more flexible country</li> </ul>

<u>Business as usual scenario</u>	<u>Alternative scenario with the GEF resources</u>
	<p>implementation of the SAP and other planning tools, and (ii) sequenced and complementary investments with more strategic use of resources, supported by regional partnership, knowledge and advocacy.</p> <p>(iii) Increased community awareness on transboundary water and environmental management</p> <p>The project, through a dedicated awareness raising programme will ensure the participation of local communities in the integrated water resources management and development of the TDA and SAP.</p> <p>The support will help ensure that TWRM principles are incorporated into national and local plans to reduce pollution and threats to the fishery and to promote freshwater biodiversity conservation efforts. This will reduce the risk of water disputes as the project activities will ensure that interests of both upstream and downstream countries are considered in the decision making.</p> <p>Based on these activities, the project will allocate around 3% of the IW budget to the IWLEARN activities; such as generation and dissemination of knowledge products highlighting the impact of a transboundary approach to watersheds management and its benefits in respect to the water resource, a dedicated water page for the MRU water unit as well as the participation to the biennial IW conference or other regional relevant water related events.</p>
<p>Co-financing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WA-BiCC project: USD 3,370,000;</li> <li>- WRCU/ECOWAS initiative: USD 500,000</li> <li>- BRIDGE/IUCN initiative: USD 290,000</li> </ul>	<p>GEF funds:</p> <p>Regional IW funds: USD: 2,034,364</p>

**Incremental cost matrix**

The following incremental cost matrix only presents the confirmed co-financing.

<b>Costs</b>	<b>Baseline (USD)</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Alternative Scenario Costs (USD)</b>	<b>Incremental costs(USD)</b>
<b>Component 1: Integrated ecosystem management</b>				
WA-BiCC project		6,630,000	6,630,000	
ROAM-CI/IUCN-UNEP-DFID		307,772	307,772	
Co-funding pledge FDA/LB		200,000	200,000	
<b>GEF funds</b>			<b>4,000,000</b>	<b>4,000,000</b>
<b>Component 2: Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters</b>				
WA-BiCC project		3,370,000	3,370,000	
WRCU/ECOWAS initiative		500,000	500,000	
BRIDGE/IUCN initiative		290,000	290,000	
<b>GEF funds</b>			<b>2,034,633</b>	<b>2,034,633</b>
<b>Project management costs</b>			301,731	301,731
<b>Sub-total (US\$)</b>		<b>11,297,772</b>	<b>17,332,405</b>	<b>6,336,364</b>
<i>Project support services (US\$)</i> <i>(Project management cost)</i>		/	633,636	633,636
<b>Total (US\$)</b>		<b>11,297,772</b>	<b>17,966,041</b>	<b>6,970,000</b>

**4.8 Sustainability**

Sustainability refers to the continuation of benefits – institutional, environmental, social, economic and financial – beyond the project.

4.8.1 Institutional sustainability

The sustainability of the project has been addressed since the early stage of this project preparation, by engaging with the major stakeholders in all aspects of project design. An intense consultative process has been undertaken. It was based on a reconnaissance mission, a scoping mission, field visits and a validation workshop.

The proposed interventions were selected on the basis of how easy it will be for governments to sustain them. They are aligned with the national priorities of each country. The high political commitment shown by the governments so far in the project development process is a fair indication of their continued interest and support. The long-term success of the project will be insured by the confirmed political will of participating governments to cooperate and sustain project interventions and outputs at project termination. The planned public awareness interventions shall contribute to build the public ownership of the project and pave of the way for a continuous support.

Memorandums of Understanding by the national executing agencies and IUCN are in the process to be signed to maintain the project outputs - the structures that will stay beyond the project lifespan like the committees.

4.8.2 Financial and economic sustainability

The likely risk to sustainability of the project is also **financial** strain initiated by the vulnerability of the national economies to global events. Financial stress reduces the ability of the states to sustain needed levels of counterpart funding and also reduces the likelihood of countries to assume the increased financial burden upon completion of GEF funding. The Mano River Union area, like several other parts of Africa, has its fair share of conflicts, civil strife, political unrest and localized disputes caused illegal logging, etc.

One key intervention contributing to project sustainability and the transferable sustainability of the GEF contribution will be the sites activities and their replicability throughout other buffer zones of the protected areas and other transboundary basins in the MRU area. As such one of the key criteria is a clear definition within the proposal of the potential for replicability of the lessons learned and the best practices developed from the site activities. These on-site activities are consistent with the TDA/SAP development process. Significant additional inputs will be required to ensure that the lessons learned are transferred from one area to another in the MRU area and this will require considerable government commitment of manpower and financial resources.

The Project will demonstrate in a replicable manner, integrated land, forest and water management strategies. The demonstrations will stress the development of cross-sectoral management approaches which will address the requirements for institutional realignment and appropriate infrastructure; adoption of new modalities for sectoral participation; enhancement of regional capacity to manage the basin in a sustainable manner; linkages to the social and economic root causes of environmental degradation; and the overall need for sustainability.

Finally, to ensure the sustainability of the main project outputs (especially the SAP), a financial mobilisation strategy will be developed to cover the funding needs of the prioritized actions of the SAP (Activity 2.19). This strategy will be used by the MRU Secretariat as a tool to advocate the support of their partners for the sustainable management of the transboundary ecosystems in the Mano River Union area. This will be complemented by continuous coordination with key bilateral and multi-lateral donors (Activity 2.20). A resource mobilization roadmap will be developed based on an international donors conference (or forum, or round-tables) and on communication in regional events related to international waters and biodiversity. Based on the approved financial resources mobilisation strategy, the Secretariat of the MRU and the Committees set-up for this project shall use these tools to leverage funding to sustain the present project outputs.

#### **4.9 Replication**

The Project potential for successful replication and reoccurrence, within the Mano River Basin and to other international water resources in west Africa is high both at the regional, national, and local levels. It is built around capacities development of the agencies in charge of forest and water resources management in the participating countries and of the Mano River Union which hold regional mandate to strengthen integration among the country members. At the national level, sites have been selected to facilitated cross-border learning processes among local communities. Particularly, this project intends to identify and disseminate best practices in activities related to production sectors that threaten the forest ecosystem are identified and disseminated in the main production sectors, and to develop capacities for using those best practices. Together with the integrated land management plans which will enable the generation of sustainable income from forest products and agroforestry, the replication of the best practices in production sectors has a high potential to occur at local communities.

At the regional level, the Mano River is also targeted by the ECOWAS regional center for water resources whose mandate to promote regional best practices in term of transboundary water resources management. Through capacity development of the MRU secretariat to prepare and adopt TDA and SAP for the protection of international waters and biodiversity, the replication of the project achievements will be taken further as the Secretariat of the MRU become a more and more competent agency. Lessons learned on the transboundary water resources and forest ecosystems will be transferred to other basins in West Africa through the connection with the ECOWAS regional center for water resources.

Finally a number of initiatives are on-going in the Mano River Basin and have been contacted to partner with. The project will promote and facilitate, through a regional forum, the exchange of experiences, and best practices in other GEF international waters projects and other comparable projects in Sub-Saharan Africa.

#### **4.10 Communication and knowledge management**

Communication and knowledge management has been addressed in every proposed activity, which at least incorporates budget items for information sharing. In addition, the following activities specifically address communication and knowledge management concerns:

- Activity 2.10 aims to develop and implement an awareness raising programme on site-specific transboundary and environmental issues. It will disseminate the best practices in production sectors, the improved management of agricultural activities, the integrated land management plans and the transboundary environmental issues identified in the TDA/SAP. The awareness raising shall target at least 300,000 people living in the 3 watersheds in which the SAP will be implemented. It shall consist in the publication of materials such as posters to be placed in community halls and other communal locations including schools, community radio programs where feasible and community drama (skits, music and illustrations). The drama sessions shall also be used in schools. Demonstration of best practices including through peer to peer knowledge transfer will be undertaken especially during community festivals and gatherings where possible. The outputs from these activities will be materials such as posters particularly in the local languages, radio programs and synthesized reports for use in production of manuals and documentation of lessons learnt for future sensitization and interventions.
- Activity 2.18 will focus on the preparation and dissemination of IW LEARN Information products. Knowledge-sharing tools and networking platforms will be developed for the exchange of environmental data and information and lessons learned from all relevant projects in the region at national, sub-regional and regional levels including web-based informational packages, the IWLEARN database, newsletters, etc. The project will connect with the GEF IW-LEARN programme that promotes experience sharing and learning among GEF International Waters projects. It will also capitalize on the regional database created in activity 2.9.
- A Communication expert will be hired to develop the communication strategy of the project and to implement communication-orientated activities (Activities 1.20 and 2.21).

More generally, communication is more than ever among the core business at IUCN from global to regional and country levels. It entails internal and external project aspects. For a relatively complex regional project involving national and regional coordination, internal communication will be key in removing misunderstanding and fostering genuine collaboration among the executing and implementation agencies. It has been highlighted during project preparation that good communication on the project, its stakeholders and their respective role would result to smooth management of and effective delivery of the project at both country and regional levels. Therefore, internal communication will aim strengthening collaboration among partner's organisations of the project. Regular contacts will be established between IUCN, the implementing agency and the executing agencies at the regional (Mano River Union Secretariat) and countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia) level. The content of such communication will include information regarding the project, its progress towards the objective, and constraints related to the proper execution and or implementation of the project. IUCN will also encourage communication across country teams to exchange information pertaining at improving the delivery of the project in all countries.

Regarding external communication and visibility, full compliance with IUCN and the GEF branding guidelines will be required. Among other, these guidelines describe when and how to use IUCN and GEF logos. These documents can be accessed at [https://www.thegef.org/gef/policies\\_guidelines/communication\\_visibility](https://www.thegef.org/gef/policies_guidelines/communication_visibility) for the GEF, and at [https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn\\_publishing\\_guidelines\\_131210.pdf](https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_publishing_guidelines_131210.pdf) For IUCN. Where other agencies and project partners have provided support through co-financing, their branding policies and requirements should be similarly applied. External communication has to deal with project publications, vehicles, supplies and other project equipment.

Likewise the communication, knowledge management will entail internal and external processes:

- Internal processes: how the project systematically collects, archives and retrieves the knowledge of its staff and how it manages internal communications among its staff in order to strengthen its knowledge base.
- External processes: how the project flows its knowledge into the hands of the people it most wants to use it; how it strengthens its knowledge through its interaction with external groups; how it learns whether its insights have made a difference.

Knowledge management will be strongly linked to the project monitoring and evaluation outputs to ensure that all collected M&E data are processed into knowledge and share with the project staff through the most appropriate communication tools, such as mailing list, the project meetings and

workshops. The objectives of this internal knowledge management process are twofold (i) getting the preliminary knowledge on the project delivery right to the main stakeholders and (ii) improving this knowledge with individual know-how. This enriched operational knowledge through internal processes will serve as inputs to the external processes of knowledge management. External knowledge management will be geared towards outreaching the project achievements and lessons to external partners at local, national, regional and international levels.

#### **4.11 Environmental and social safeguards**

*This section will explain how the project ensures the environmental and social safeguards are fully respected. It will refer to the results of the ESMS screening. In the case when the screening has classified the project as high or moderate risk project, this chapter will include a summary of the main findings from the ESIA and how they have been taken into consideration in the project design (including a reference to the ESMP).*

During the PPG phase a socio-economic assessment has been carried out visiting all four sites identified for field intervention. The project report is attached in appendix 12. The assessment has allowed gaining a high level understanding of livelihood conditions, expectation, and pressure on natural resources. It further pointed out challenges and typical pitfalls of projects in the sites aimed at promoting natural resource management. The action-oriented nature of the project implies that further and more detailed assessment can only be undertaken once certain decisions have been taken, among others the determination of types of access restrictions to be applied in the protected areas and promoted by the project.

Forest ecosystem management is improved by promoting the restoration of productivity of tree-based systems and by developing integrated land use plans. However, low to moderate impacts on the livelihood of local communities might be expected as some of the measures for protected areas such as (re-)classification and zoning or protected areas and development of integrated land use plans might involve restricting access to forest resources. The type and magnitude of these restrictions and their impact on livelihood can only be determined during project implementation when the restrictions are established. Until the significance of this has been determined the project is conservatively classified as moderate risk project.

Other impacts are considered minor, some are still to be determined at the begin of project implementation upon availability of project site data.

The project has been conditionally cleared; assessment results and reports indicated in the clearance report (see appendix 9) are to be submitted to IUCN. The Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) is attached in Appendix 10.

## 5 Institutional framework and implementation arrangements

The proposed institutional set-up to implement the project activities is depicted in the organisational flow provided in **Appendix 2** and is described in the following sub-sections.

### 5.1 Regional Decision making and planning

**The Steering Committee (SC):** The project will set up a task force to assist in facilitating the project implementation in the four MRU countries. The SC will serve as a regional steering committee in an advisor capacity for project implementation activities. Proposed Steering Committee members would include the MRU Executive Secretariat as the Secretariat of the task force, high level government representatives from participating countries to assure relative Chair (on a rotational basis), representatives from national executing agencies (National Focal Points, see below), other (major) projects intervening in the MRU countries (WA-BiCC, BRIDGE, etc.). IUCN will participate, as an observer. The finalized list of Task Force members will be completed during the project inception phase, but no later than three months. The Steering Committee will meet annually to monitor past progress in project execution, and to review and approve annual work plans and budgets. Key members will meet as needed for activity specific guidance and will:

- Align the Project with other Basin-wide initiatives;
- Monitor Project progress and take timely actions to resolve implementation constraints;
- Liaise with different national Project coordination units within the riparian countries to ensure that the national units and the regional PMU act in harmony;
- Receive and review annual substantive and financial reports on project activities;
- Review and approve annual work plans;
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation of project activities.

**Regional Executing Agency: Mano River Union Secretariat.** Based on its mandate “to promote cooperation among the member countries and to ensure integrated development in all fields”, the Mano River Union is entitled and has the leverage to serve as the Regional Executing Agency. Its core function will be the facilitation of the project activities. The Mano River Union will be supported by partner government agencies (**National Executing Agencies**), for project activities implementation.

For this purpose, a contract will be signed between IUCN and the MRU Secretariat. The MRU Executive Secretariat will ensure close coordination and harmonization with other on-going projects, especially ensuring information exchange and coordination within the context of the TDA and SAP development activities. In order to ensure appropriate implementation and monitoring of the project, the capacity of the Secretariat will be comprehensively assessed with the aim of bridging the existing gaps.

For the project implementation at regional level, MRU shall be assisted by a Regional Project Management Unit, hosted at MRU Secretariat (see section 5.3). MRU shall undertake coordination with regional institutions, governments, national executing agencies and IUCN the implementing agency. In close collaboration with the IUCN, MRU will undertake the:

- Recruitment of international and local project staff;
- Management of RPMU International staff
- Financial Control and management of project budget and expenditures
- Management of sub-contracts;
- Arrangement of training component;
- Procurement of equipment;
- Periodic reporting to UICN as required;
- Provision of miscellaneous component;

Administrative, accounting, financial and auditing arrangements will be finalized with IUCN prior to any disbursement:

- Assessment of the financial management system with timetable for any improvements required;
- Agreement with Project on financial and accounting standards;

- Audit arrangements, to ensure independent audits will be undertaken on an annual basis according to standard Implementing Agency requirements;
- Procurement Plan based on traditional disbursement procedures and best practice.
- All administrative reporting, monitoring and evaluation requirements and procedures as required by the implementing agencies.

**Implementing Agency:** IUCN is the implementing agency for the Project. IUCN will support MRU to ensure execution of administrative and financial matters and will assist in key technical and scientific issues. The IUCN role will also be to consolidate results with national governments, directly facilitate workshops and the convening of key stakeholders consistent with its comparative advantage in capacity building, work to secure national country-based financial resources to complement Project activities. Wherever possible, the project will take advantage of the opportunities for synergy and complementarities with other project or other GEF Agencies. Especially, the opportunities for involving the World Bank (WB), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other relevant technical and financial partners in potential investment opportunities will be explored during project implementation to have a partner for follow up investments for on-the-ground activities. Specifically, it will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Supervise project implementation
- Monitor and evaluate project performance, prepare implementation review
- Provide technical backstopping to executing agencies at national and regional level
- Ensure quality control of the project workplans, budget and reports

## 5.2 National decision making and planning

The project is owned by the four riparian countries. In each country, there will be a lead agency representing the government (they are listed in section 1, as **National Executing Agencies**). Other relevant agencies in the countries give their support to the project through inter-ministerial coordination meetings and actions.

In each country, the National Executing Agency shall designate a high-level representative as **National Focal Point** for the project. The National Focal Points will help assure intersectoral coordination with their country, as a step towards sustainability. Through the establishment of inter-ministerial dialogue, it is anticipated that wide involvement of many ministries and government departments as stakeholders will be assured. This will result in high-level government acceptance of the outcomes of the preparatory activities and hence approval of the Strategic Action Programme. Regional or local NGOs and the private sector will be invited to have observers sit at the PTF/Steering Committee Meetings. The National Focal Point will represent the National Executing Agency in the PTF/SC meetings at regional level.

The National Executing Agency shall appoint therefore a **National Inter-ministerial Committee (NIC)** for the project, gathering the different sectorial institutions involved in forest and water management at national and local levels. The National Focal Point will be the chair of this duly appointed National Inter-ministerial Committee of the project. The committee will oversee a network of national/regional educational, research, governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations, which will be responsible for administering and implementing project activities at national and local levels, according to a common workplan. The committee and network will work closely to assure that the governments will endorse their work products, but the project will retain some independence in naming individuals to the committees to assure broad representation of stakeholders. During the implementation, governments will be directly involved in the regionally coordinated activities through the participation of national institutions and experts in activities planned under this project. The meetings and work/decision of the National Inter-ministerial Committee will be supported and implemented by a National Project Coordination Unit.

During the Project design phase, the stakeholders proposed the following institutions as national executing agencies:

- **Côte d'Ivoire:** Ministère des Eaux et des forêts, Direction de la gestion et de la protection des ressources en eau (DGP/RE/MINEF);
- **Guinea:** Ministère de l'Environnement, des Eaux et des Forêts, Centre forestier de N'Zérékoré;

- **Liberia:** Forestry Development Authority;
- **Sierra Leone:** National Protected Area Authority (Ministry of Agricultural Forestry and Food Security)

IUCN, as implementing agency, will contract the Regional Executing Agency (MRU). MRU will then subcontract the appropriate country institution, designated as National Executing Agency. In each country, a National Project Management Unit will be recruited by the contracted country institution in close collaboration with IUCN and MRU, to lead the NPCU staff in implementing the Project at the national level.

Given that sites for field demonstration are remotely far from the country capitals and that national agencies in charge of forest and water resources management are not operational on sites in every countries, there is need to establish **site-level implementation units**. They will be supervised and managed by two Technical Assistants, funded by the component 1 budget. They will be involved in every activity of the component 1. This will provide opportunities to apply the subsidiary principles which appear as key to the success of field intervention. Therefore, community-based organizations and/or nongovernmental organizations would be involved in the decision-making and implementation process, and in tackling the priority issues. At local level, these local community-based implementation units (NGOs, community-based organizations) will be working closely with the NPCU in educating the local community on the specifics of local level component activities, and the supported demonstration actions. They will work with local authorities and local coordinating committees in developing the site-specific demonstration activities. The collaborative effort of the local public institutions and civil society organisations is vital for the program success. It will provide opportunities for communities to communicate amongst themselves and with local government, and be responsible for assisting in the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the demonstration programs. The NPCU will contract the competent local community-based implementation units, based on the national procurement policies, compatible with IUCN and GEF procurement policies.

### **5.3 Project coordination and management**

The project coordination and management will benefit from regional, national and local implementing and executing agencies. The project coordination and management will be made up of sixteen (16) staffs supported by the project resources and will rely on the following units:

**The Regional Project Management Unit (RPMU)** will be established with the help of the Implementation Agency (IUCN) and will provide a management structure for the development and implementation of the project in accordance with the rules and procedures of GEF/IUCN and consistent with directions provided by the Steering Committee/PTF. The RPMU will be hosted by the Mano River Union Secretariat in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and will consist of 4 staffs: a Regional Project Coordinator, a M&E Specialist, a Communication Specialist and an Accountant - Bilingual Administrative Assistant. The RPMU could be part of the future Natural Resource Management Unit under establishment at MRU Secretariat, and will work closely with the Secretariat's relevant other Units, e.g. the Special Delivery Unit, to help develop capacity even further and insure smooth implementation. The RPMU will be responsible for:

- Provide technical guidance to regional and national project management Units for the annual workplan and budget preparation;
- Ensure proper M&E and communication of the project achievements;
- Ensure proper financial management and reporting of the project resources;
- Ensure fluid communication between the executing and implementing agencies;
- Ensure compliance with GEF and IUCN project management procedures and standards;
- Consolidation of regional workplan and budget from national project management units
- Preparation of bid document for the regional technical component of the project;
- Procurements for the regional component of the project;
- Regional contract administration
- Consolidation regional reports from national project management units;
- Etc.

**National Project Coordination Units.** With the project support, the national executing agency in each participating government shall establish a National Project Coordination Unit (NPCU), located at the appropriate national agencies in charge of forest and water resources management. The NPCU

shall report to the National Focal Point. The NPCU will work closely with the RPMU and MRU, and will be responsible for implementing the Project at the national level. The NPCU provides a critical link between the RPMU, other Project resource persons and the various national specialists, technical services, and organizations involved in implementing the various project components within the respective countries. Each national Unit will be constituted of 3 staffs (1 National Project Coordinator, 1 Driver and 1 Accountant), totalizing **12 staffs**. The national executing agency will appoint a National Project Coordinator (NPC) to lead the NPCU, and to undertake all day-to-day interventions, inputs, and communications at the respective national level. The National Project Coordinator will serve as a Secretary to the National Inter-Ministerial Implementation Committee, reporting to the National Focal Point. He will be assisted by a Driver and an Accountant/Assistant. The role of the NPCU is:

- Preparation of national workplan and budget;
- Preparation of bid document for national component of the project;
- Procurements for national component of the project;
- National contract administration;
- Prepare national component reports.

IUCN, as implementing agency, will designate internally a **Regional Task Team**, composed of adequate thematic experts, in charge of supervision and backstopping. These experts will provide backstopping to the RPMU and NPCU to ensure effective implementation of the project at regional and national level. The role of the backstopping team is:

- Issue contracts of the main experts of the RPMU and NPCU;
- Provide technical guidance to regional and national project management Units for the annual workplan and budget preparation;
- Ensure proper M&E and communication of the project achievements;
- Ensure proper financial management and reporting of the project resources;
- Ensure fluid communication between the executing and implementing agencies;
- Ensure compliance with GEF and IUCN project management procedures and standards.

The MRU Secretariat and the relevant government ministries will designate qualified staff to coordinate implementation in the targeted landscapes. Landscape coordination committees made up of local experts and stakeholders will guide implementation at the local level. Where necessary, technical assistance will be facilitated by RPMU and NPCU, based on the dedicated activities in components 1 and 2.

#### **5.4 Procurement procedures and plan**

Procurement will be carried out in accordance with the Policy and Procedure on Procurement of Goods and Services of IUCN in November 2011. This policy aims at ensuring that executing agencies obtains value for money in all its procurement activities and that procurement is conducted in an efficient and cost effective manner that respects sustainability, the environment and ethical principles. It therefore sets the procurement method depending on the value of Goods or Services, and includes the level of delegation of authority. The following defines procurement categories, methods and thresholds.

**Procurement of civil works:** No civil works are expected to be procured under this project.

**Procurement of Goods:** “Goods” includes commodities, raw material, machinery, equipment and vehicles. All procurement of goods shall be carried out in accordance with the IUCN procurement policy (see procurement methods and thresholds in Table.....

**Procurement of non-consulting services:** Non-consulting services for which the physical aspects of the activity predominate, are bid and contracted on the basis of performance of a measurable physical output, and for which performance standards can be clearly identified and consistently applied, such as drilling, aerial photography, satellite imagery, mapping, and similar operations. Procurement of non-consulting services will be conducted in accordance with the World Bank Procurement Guidelines (see procurement methods and thresholds in Table 11 below on Goods, Works and Non-consulting services).

The use of civil servants as individual consultant or as a team member of Consultants firms will strictly follow the provisions of Article 1.9 to 1.11 of the Consultant Guidelines.

Goods and non-consulting services shall be procured under contracts awarded on the basis of “International Competitive Bidding”. However, “Shopping”, is another method, other than International Competitive Bidding, that may also be used for procurement of goods and non-consulting services for those contracts specified in the Joint Procurement Plan

Table 7: Goods and non-consultant services procurement procedures

Description	Procurement Methods	Threshold US\$	Prior review
<b>1. Works</b>	No works will be financed	No works will be financed	No works will be financed
<b>2. Goods and Non-Consultant services</b>	Quality and Cost Based Selection		All

**Selection of Consultants:** Consulting services foreseen will be procured with the most appropriate procurement method allowed by the World Bank Guidelines and included in the Joint Procurement Plan approved by the World Bank : (a) Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS); (b) Least Cost Selection (LCS); (c) Selection under a Fixed Budget (FBS); (d) Selection based on the Consultant’s Qualification (CQ) for the selection of firm for contract estimated to cost less than US\$200,000; (e) Single Source (SS) Selection of consulting firms shall be used with the World Bank’s agreement for services in accordance with paragraphs 3.10 to 3.12 of the Guidelines.

Terms of reference will be subject to the World Bank review. Short lists of consultants for services estimated to cost less than US\$200,000 equivalent per contract may be composed entirely of national consultants in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2.7 of the Consultant Guidelines.

Consultant services meeting the requirements of section V of the consultant guidelines will be selected under the provisions for the Selection of Individual Consultants through the comparison of the curriculum vitae of at least three qualified individuals, and Single-source procedures for the Selection of Individual Consultants (see procurement methods and thresholds below in Table 7 on Selection of Consultants).

Table 7: Selection of Consultants

Description	Procurement methods	Threshold (US\$)	Prior review
<b>Consultant Firms</b>	QCBS; QBS; LCS; LBS	≥ 200.000	All
	CQ	<200.000	All
	SSS	No threshold	All
<b>Individual Consultants</b>	IC (Advertisement)	≥ 100.000	All
	IC (Three CVs)	< 100.000	All
	SSS	No threshold	First contract and then all contracts estimated above the equivalent of 5,000 US\$
<b>All TORs are submitted for prior review</b>			

QCBS: Quality and Cost Based Selection; QBS: Quality Based Selection; LCS: Least Cost Selection; LBS: Limited Budget Selection; CQ: Consultant Qualifications; IC: Individual Consultant; SSS: Single-source

The procurement plan for good, non-consultant services and consultant services is provided in appendix 12.

**Training Programs, Conferences, Workshops, etc.:** All training and workshops will be carried out on the basis of the project's joint work plans and budgets approved by the IUCN, and which will among others, identify: (i) the envisaged training and workshops; (ii) the personnel to be trained; (iii) the institutions which will conduct the training; and (iv) duration of the proposed training.

**Operating Costs:** Operating Costs include office supplies, operation and maintenance of vehicles, maintenance of equipment, communication, rental, utilities, consumables, transport and accommodation, travel costs and per diem, etc. Operating costs procedures will follow the World Bank Procurement Guidelines.

**Project management unit:** Terms of reference for all full-time positions will be developed in close collaboration between IUCN and the executing agencies.

## **6 Stakeholder engagement and participation**

### **STAKEHOLDER CONTRIBUTION TO THE DESIGN PHASE**

The project components design process, during the PPG mission, benefited from the contributions of various regional, national and local stakeholders. Regional, national and local stakeholders from the national institutions; the private sector and the civil society have indeed been invited to share data and information on the transboundary environmental issues they face. They were also invited to express their needs in terms of capacity building, institutional strengthening and on-the-ground intervention to tackle these issues. Local and national consultations (8-26/02/2016 and 15-27/03/2016, respectively) and dedicated work sessions during the regional workshops held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (18/02/2016) and Monrovia (02/05/2016) in the framework of the PPG mission were specifically organised to ease this information sharing. A broad range of stakeholders took part to these exercises. The minutes of the consultations are detailed in the project scoping report. The detailed contributions provided during the workshop sessions are available in the workshop reports.

### **STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT**

Technical partners will undertake activities under contractual arrangements. The project will coordinate with all the sector initiatives implemented by other agencies in the sub-region. IUCN has initiated discussions at national and regional levels with other development partners on developing an integrated approach to addressing biodiversity conservation and forest ecosystems management in the region. These partners include Rainforest Alliance, considered as a key partner to the project implementation, among others.

Successful implementation of the project will depend on the active participation of stakeholders. To assure this, stakeholder involvement is recognized as an integral requirement for each project component. In endorsing the project document, the countries of the region recognize and embrace the need for this direct involvement by all stakeholders in the project process. The primary stakeholders in this project include:

- Public Sector: ministries responsible for land and water resources, environment, tourism, planning, agriculture (forestry, fisheries), industry, community development, and education;
- Local government authorities;
- Private Sector: manufacturers/industrialists (forestry, agriculture and mining industries);
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): national trusts, conservation associations, women's organizations, national and regional organizations representing farmers, fisher-folk community-based organizations (CBOs);
- Professionals: researchers, sociologists, medical practitioners, environmental managers, engineers (water, civil, environmental), biologists, teachers, curriculum specialists, media practitioners; and,
- The Public: traditional rulers, farmers, fisher-folk, women, nomadic herdsmen, hunters etc.

A stakeholder participation plan is under development to indicate how the various stakeholders will be involved, and at what stages. In order to attain sustainability, the activities are designed to address

interests of large groups of stakeholders, and a significant portion of the budget is designated for this task. Indicative roles of identified key partners are detailed in the following stakeholder table.

The presence of the stakeholders at local level is sporadic. For this reason, the extension services of the public organizations will be supported to enable them to endorse and actually implement their mandate. This shall stimulate the empowerment of local stakeholders and strengthen their interventions on site.

*Table 8: Preliminary stakeholder involvement plan*

Stakeholders	Country	Role / involvement in project
Rainforest Alliance	SL-LIB-GN	Support activities 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8
RSPB-SL – Gola Rainforest NP	SL	Support activities 1.13, 1.15, 1.17 in SL sites
Conservation Society of Sierra Leone	SL	Support activity 1.13 in SL sites
Farmers Association to Conserve the Environment (FACE)	LB	Support activities 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.10, 1.17 & 1.19 in LB sites
Rural Integrated Center for Community Empowerment (RICCE)	LB	Support activities 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.14, 1.17 in LB sites
Fauna and Flora International (FFI)	LB	Support activity 1.13 in LB sites
Fauna and Flora International, International (FFI)	GN	Support activity 1.13 in GN sites
Centre de gestion environnementale des Monts Nimba (CEGENS)	GN	Benefit from the project support to implement conservation interventions (Activity 1.7) and training sessions (Activity 1.10)
Centre forestier de Nzérékoré	GN	Benefit from the project support to implement conservation interventions (Activity 1.7) and training sessions (Activity 1.10)
Cooperative Woko associated to the Institut de Recherches et d'Applications des Méthodes de développement - IRAM (Production certifiée de Café Robusta « Café Ziama-Macenta »)	GN	Support activities 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.10 & 1.19 in GN sites
National Council of Civil Society Organizations in Guinea	GN	Support activities 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.15 for national portions of the targeted basins
Ivoirian Observatory of Natural Resources (OI-REN)	CI	Benefit from the project support to implement conservation interventions (Activity 1.7) and training sessions (Activity 1.10)
Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves (OIPR)	CI	Benefit from the project support to implement conservation interventions (Activity 1.7) and training sessions (Activity 1.10)
Fondation des Parcs et Réserves	CI	Benefit from the project support to implement conservation interventions (Activity 1.7) and training sessions (Activity 1.10)
National Water Partnership in Ivory Coast (PNECI)	CI	Support activities 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.15 for national portions of the targeted basin

## 7 Monitoring and evaluation plan

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the proposed project will be conducted in accordance with established IUCN and GEF procedures/guidelines and includes a series of linked activities, including a complete Project Document, Tripartite Reviews, Annual Project Reports, and mid-term and final project evaluations.

Monitoring and evaluation begins with preparation of the Project Document, including a logical framework matrix (Log Frame) based on indicators of implementation progress and means of verification. This Log Frame will underpin the M&E system for the proposed project. The monitoring of the progress in executing the components and activities will be a central function of the Project Steering Committee who is the oversight body. As part of its Terms of Reference, the Project Steering Committee will review and evaluate the objectives and outputs of the project during execution as well as identify and respond to emerging issues as they arise. The RPMU includes a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, who will manage and monitor the overall M&E system of the project. He will refine and detail the set of indicators presented in the Logical Framework, applying the structure of GEF IW and Biodiversity indicators, based on process (e.g., policy, legal, institutional, etc. reforms), stress reduction (e.g., reduced logging, reduced deforestation, etc.) and environmental and social status indicators (e.g., restored habitats, sustainably managed forests, etc.).

The standard M&E reports and procedures required for all IUCN/GEF projects will apply to the M&E plan for the proposed project, including the following:

**Inception Workshop and Report.** The regional Inception Workshop gathering the stakeholders involved in the project, and resulting Inception Report are the venue and means to finalize preparations for the implementation of the proposed project, involving the formulation of the first annual work plan, detailing of stakeholder roles and responsibilities, and of reporting and monitoring requirements. It is noteworthy, however, that the preparation of the Project Document of the proposed project already adopted a consultative process based on scoping and field missions, as well as two regional stakeholder workshops. It is therefore anticipated that the inception workshop and the resulting report ensuing during the incipient months of the succeeding project's implementation would result in minor adjustments to the provisions in the original Project Document.

**Quarterly Progress Report.** Each quarter, the RPMU will prepare a brief summary of the project's substantive and technical progress towards achieving its objectives. The summaries will be reviewed and cleared by IUCN/PACO before being sent to the IUCN/GEF Coordinator;

**The Annual Project Report (APR) / project implementation review** is designed to obtain the independent views of the main stakeholders of a project on its relevance, performance and the likelihood of its success. The APR covers performance assessment on project outputs and outcomes, major achievements, early evidence of success, constraints experienced, lessons learned and recommendations as well as an overall rating of the project. The APR will be prepared by the Project Coordinator and the M&E officer, after consultation with the relevant stakeholders, and will be submitted to IUCN. The stakeholder review will focus on the logical framework matrix and the performance indicators. Stakeholders could include a letter to the IUCN that they have been consulted and their views taken into account. A Terminal Project Report will be prepared for the terminal meeting.

**Tripartite Review (TPR) (Steering committee).** The Tri-Partite Review (TPR) is a policy-level meeting of the parties directly involved in the implementation of a project. The same parties involved in the prior Inception Workshop will participate in the TPR, ie the members of the Steering Committee, including the regional and national executing agencies, IUCN, RPMU/NPMU, the direct beneficiaries, and other stakeholders. It will assess the progress of the project and take decisions on recommendations to improve the design and implementation of the project in order to achieve the expected results. On these occasions, the Project Coordinator will submit an updated workplan (if required) and the latest Annual Project Report (APR), and formulate recommendations for eventual adjustments of strategies and activities. A draft APR shall be prepared at least two months in advance of the TPR to allow review by IUCN prior to the meeting. The Executing Agencies make sure that the recommendations of the TPR are carried out. Annual TPRs are not required as the Steering Committee meetings are expected to address many of the issues that would normally be addressed in a TPR.

**Independent External Evaluation at mid-term and termination of the project.** A mid-term project evaluation will be conducted during the second implementation year, focusing on relevance; performance (effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness); issues requiring decisions and actions; and initial lessons learned about project design, implementation and management. A final evaluation, which occurs three months prior to the final TPR meeting, focuses on the same issues as the mid-term evaluation but also covers impact, sustainability, and follow-through recommendations, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals.

**Budget Revisions.** Project budget revisions will reflect the final expenditures for the preceding year, to enable the preparation of a realistic plan for the provision of inputs for the current year. Other budget revisions may be undertaken as necessary during the course of the project. It is expected that significant revisions will be cleared with the IUCN/GEF Coordinator for consistency with the GEF principle of incrementality and GEF eligibility criteria before being approved;

**Corresponding budget.** The corresponding budget for the M&E plan is USD 621,200, excluding the PPG grant. The detailed budget of the M&E plan is provided within the detailed budget of the overall GEF project (Appendix 5).

The overall monitoring and evaluation plan is summarized in Table 9.

*Table 9: M&E Activities, Timeframes, and Responsibilities*

M&E activity	Frequency	Responsible	Budget (GEF funded)
1. Drafting Project Planning Documents: Prodoc, Logframe (including indicators), M&E Plan	During project design stage	Project proponent together with RCU Staff and consultants and other stakeholders	PPG grant. (USD 560,000)
2. Quarterly Progress Report	Quarterly	M&E expert and regional and national project coordinators	Activities 1.20 and 2.21 (Total activities budget: USD 381,000)
3. Annual Project Progress Report	Annually	M&E expert, regional and national project coordinators in consultation with project stakeholders	(Total activities budget: USD 381,000)
4. Tripartite Review / Project Implementation Review (PIR)	At 18 months	MRU (Regional Executing Agency), The Governments (National Executing Agencies), Regional Project Coordinator, project team, IUCN,	(Total activities budget: USD 381,000)
5. Independent External Evaluation	At the mid-point and end of project implementation	Implementing agency to hire audit experts	Activities 1.22 and 2.23 (USD 165,200)
6. Budget revisions	When necessary	Project team (M&E officer), IUCN headquarters	Activities 1.21 and 2.22 (USD 75,000)

In addition to the standard IUCN and GEF procedures outlined above, the project will benefit from annual Steering Committee Meetings. The Steering Committee is the primary policy-making body for the present Mano River project. The Regional Project Coordinator will schedule and report on Steering Committee Meetings.

## 8 Project financing and budget

The overall project budget is 6,970,000 USD, excluding the PPG mission costs. It comprises the following items:

- Implementing Agency Fee: 633,636 USD;
- Activities Budget: 6,034,633 USD.
  - Component 1 – Integrated Ecosystem Management: 4,000,000 USD;
  - Component 2: Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters: 2,034,633 USD
- Project Management Cost (Component 3): 301,731 USD;

The summary of the activities budget is presented below (Table 10). The detailed budget is provided in Appendix 5.

*Table 10: Proposed budget of the project*

Activities	Details	Total Budget	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project</b>		<b>6 336 364</b>	<b>1 933 218</b>	<b>1 378 241</b>	<b>1 389 941</b>	<b>1 622 964</b>
<b>Component 1 Integrated Forest Ecosystem Management</b>		<b>4 000 000</b>	<b>1 406 680</b>	<b>860 040</b>	<b>802 240</b>	<b>919 040</b>
Outcome 1.1	Transboundary natural resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystems are managed in a sustainable manner, involving local communities.					
Output 1.1.1	<i>Site-specific guidelines for restoration of productivity of tree-based systems produced to promote the use of best practices in forest and landscape restoration interventions and sedentary agricultural practices in the main production sectors affecting forest ecosystems</i>					
Activity 1.1	Procure project operation logistics	1 156 600	397 900	252 900	252 900	252 900
Activity 1.2	Undertake investigation and data compilation on best practices and results from different forest and landscape restoration interventions such as sustainable forestry, natural regeneration, enrichment planting, reforestation, nature compliant mining and other tree-based agricultural practices such traditional and enhanced agroforestry systems	46 520	46 520	0	0	0
Activity 1.3	Identify and establish on-farm learning/production plots to support and strengthen diverse trees components in existing agricultural systems;	147 200	147 200	0	0	0
Activity 1.4	Produce guidelines for site specific best practices or opportunities in the use of tree-based systems	57 520	57 520	0	0	0
Activity 1.5	Disseminate the guideline documents during awareness raising campaigns held in cooperation with the main stakeholders	88 800	88 800	0	0	0
Output 1.1.2	<i>Training systems established for farmers on how to improve management practices to meet certification programs</i>					
Activity 1.6	Establish offers for training courses and promote them via the media to the different target groups like farmers and land use planners	37 200	37 200	0	0	0
Activity 1.7	Work with Rainforest Alliance expert to develop Terms of Reference to train strategic organisations on silvicultural oriented new agricultural measures/approaches and their certification principles	245 100	61 275	61 275	61 275	61 275
Activity 1.8	Provide follow-up training sessions for the main stakeholders and their target groups	95 200	23 800	23 800	23 800	23 800
Output 1.1.3	<i>Improved management of agriculture activities within the vicinity of protected areas</i>					
Activity 1.9	Produce initial maps of tree-based restoration opportunities, prepare reports on findings and ground survey needs	85 300	21 925	21 125	21 125	21 125
Activity 1.10	Select and train staff for the Forest/Agriculture intersection and appoint them in the extension services for consultancy services offered to the targeted farmers	108 800	30 200	28 400	26 000	24 200
Activity 1.11	Revise and produce legal documents gazetting the project relevant forest rehabilitation areas with agroforestry measures	155 000	38 750	38 750	38 750	38 750
Activity 1.12	Establish local Consultative Committees and transboundary platforms and hold their meetings	180 000	45 000	45 000	45 000	45 000
Activity 1.13	Deliver in situ technical assistance and monitoring over the project lifespan to ensure sustainability of the results	657 600	164 400	164 400	164 400	164 400

<b>Output 1.1.4</b>	<i>Integrated land use plans developed to enable the generation of sustainable sources of income from different restoration interventions</i>				
Activity 1.14	Gather information on human populations and socio-economic economic	95 160	23 790	23 790	23 790
Activity 1.15	Hold workshops with demonstration of recommendations for improvement of land use methods and reorganisation of rural land-use zoning around the protected areas	212 000	63 400	42 600	63 400
Activity 1.16	Produce formal recommendations for legal (re)classification and zoning of identified priority forest areas	110 800	56 400	0	54 400
Activity 1.17	Negotiate integrated land use plans in a participatory way with stakeholders and target groups	32 000	8 000	8 000	8 000
Activity 1.18	Hold Advisory Committees	26 400	6 600	6 600	6 600
Activity 1.19	Verify via progress and evaluation reports, and visits to the targeted farmers	48 000	12 000	12 000	0
<b>Outcome 1.2</b>	<b>Component 1 is monitored and evaluated</b>				
<b>Output 1.2.1</b>	<i>Project progress towards outcomes documented and shared with all stakeholders</i>				
Activity 1.20	Organise project annual reporting, review and planning including M&E missions	254 000	63 500	63 500	63 500
Activity 1.21	Organise project steering committee meetings	50 000	12 500	12 500	12 500
<b>Output 1.2.2</b>	<i>Project evaluation and audit mission carried out.</i>				
Activity 1.22	Organise Project mid-term and end evaluation, and audits	110 800	0	55 400	55 400
<b>TOTAL Component 1</b>	<b>4 000 000</b>		<b>1 406 680</b>	<b>860 040</b>	<b>802 240</b>

Activities	Details	TOTAL BUDGET	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>Component 2</b>	<b>Sustainable Management of Transboundary</b>	<b>2 034 633</b>	<b>451 105</b>	<b>442 768</b>	<b>512 268</b>	<b>628 491</b>
<b>Outcome 2.1</b>	<b>Water resources are managed at the regional level based on a high level intergovernmental agreement</b>					
<b>Output 2.1.1</b>	<i>National inter-ministry committees established and operational</i>					
Activity 2.1	Organise ministerial consultations to identify relevant members of the national interministerial committees	48 000	48 000	-	-	-
Activity 2.2	Set-up officially the national inter-ministerial committees and prepare their mandate, action plan and organisational frameworks	20 000	20 000	-	-	-
Activity 2.3	Support the implementation of the national interministerial committees action plans	136 000	34 000	34 000	34 000	34 000
<b>Output 2.1.2</b>	<i>Reinforced capacities to prepare and adopt TDA and SAP for the protection of international waters and biodiversity</i>					
Activity 2.4	Develop a detailed stakeholder analysis of the water sector in the targeted transboundary basins	22 600	22 600	-	-	-
Activity 2.5	Determine training needs of the regional, national and local stakeholders involved in the TDA and SAP process and develop a training programme	22 600	22 600	-	-	-
Activity 2.6	Implement training sessions in each participating country concerning the methodological approach and the planning process for preparing a TDA and a SAP in a transboundary basin	100 600	100 600	-	-	-
Activity 2.7	Organize a study tour in one other international river basin organisation having developed a TDA and a SAP	86 400	-	86 400	-	-
Activity 2.8	Facilitate national training workshops for water governance champions on themes including leadership skills, action planning, policy influencing and gender mainstreaming in each targeted basin (Moa/Makona, Cavally, Great Scarries/Kolanté)	50 400	8 047	21 176	21 176	-
Activity 2.9	Set-up a simple regional database storing data and information compiled about international waters and biodiversity	14 900	3 725	3 725	3 725	3 725
<b>Outcome 2.2</b>	<b>Technical and financial capacity of government institutions for transboundary water resource management is strengthened</b>					
<b>Output 2.2.1</b>	<i>Awareness raising program focused on transboundary and environmental issues designed and implemented</i>					
Activity 2.10	Develop and implement an awareness raising programme on site-specific transboundary and environmental issues	171 200	-	57 067	57 067	57 067
<b>Output 2.2.2</b>	<i>The regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis is prepared and under the process of being validated and adopted at ministerial level. The preliminary regional Strategic Actions Programs is prepared</i>					
Activity 2.11	Establish national and regional technical advisory teams for the management of the preparation of the TDA and SAP processes in the targeted basins	57 900	14 475	14 475	14 475	14 475
Activity 2.12	Support to the establishment of a transboundary committee in the (i) Moa-Makona, (ii) Cavally, (iii) Great Scarries basins	48 900	12 225	12 225	12 225	12 225
Activity 2.13	Development of the regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis	380 500	126 833	126 833	126 833	-

Activity 2.14	Follow-up and support of the review and adoption process at ministerial and regional levels of the final geographically-specific TDA	96 000	-	-	48 000	48 000
Activity 2.15	Disseminate broadly the adopted Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis in the 3 targeted basins	18 000	-	-	9 000	9 000
Activity 2.16	Development of the preliminary Strategic Action Programme	378 300	-	-	126 100	252 200
Output 2.2.3	<i>IW learn products generated and disseminated to a broad community of local, national and regional stakeholders</i>					
Activity 2.17	Development of IW LEARN Information products and dissemination	65 000	-	21 667	21 667	21 667
Output 2.2.4	<i>Financial resource mobilization strategy developed and implemented</i>					
Activity 2.18	Development of the resource mobilization strategy	55 200	-	-	-	55 200
Activity 2.19	Liaise with bilateral and multi-lateral donors : international donors conference and communication in regional events	55 733	-	-	-	55 733
Outcome 2.3	Component 2 is monitored and evaluated					
Output 2.3.1	<i>Project progress towards outcomes documented and shared with all stakeholders</i>					
Activity 2.20	Organise project annual reporting, review and planning including M&E missions	127 000	31 750	31 750	31 750	31 750
Activity 2.21	Organise project steering committee meetings	25 000	6 250	6 250	6 250	6 250
Output 2.3.2	<i>Project evaluation and audit mission carried out.</i>					
Activity 2.22	Organise Project mi-term and end evaluation, and audits	54 400	-	27 200	-	27 200
<b>TOTAL Component 2</b>		<b>2 034 633</b>	<b>451 105</b>	<b>442 768</b>	<b>512 268</b>	<b>628 491</b>

Activities	Details	TOTAL BUDGET	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>Project Management Costs</b>		<b>301 731</b>	<b>75 433</b>	<b>75 433</b>	<b>75 433</b>	<b>75 433</b>
Outcome 3.1	The project is implemented					
Output 3.1.1:	<i>Project management team established and functional</i>					
Activity 3.1	Appoint the project management and coordination units at regional and national levels	270 000	67 500	67 500	67 500	67 500
Activity 3.2	Procure office equipment to the project management and coordination units	31 731	7 933	7 933	7 933	7 933
<b>TOTAL Project management cost</b>		<b>301 731</b>	<b>75 433</b>	<b>75 433</b>	<b>75 433</b>	<b>75 433</b>

As detailed in the following table 6 established based on the Project Identification Form, the project activities are funded by regional GEF funds dedicated to International Waters and Sustainable Forest Management. Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone have pledged national GEF STAR funds for specific on-the-ground activities related to Biodiversity and Land Degradation focal areas.

The allocation of the national and regional GEF funds, based on the proposed activities, is shown in the following table 11. This shows that on-the-ground interventions actually benefit to the countries having pledged national GEF STAR funds.

*Table 11: Allocation of the GEF STAR Funds pledged by Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone and of the SFM and IW regional funds, according to the proposed project activities (including project management costs).*

	CI	GN	LB	SL	Regional	SUBTOTAL	Agency fee (10%)	TOTAL
Regional SFM funds	-	-	-	-	1 053 774	1 053 774	105 377	<b>1 159 152</b>
National BD/LD STAR funds	-	1 049 127	1 049 127	1 049 127	-	3 147 380	314 738	<b>3 462 118</b>
Regional IW funds	-	-	-	-	2 135 210	2 135 210	213 521	<b>2 348 731</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>1 660 337</b>	<b>1 049 127</b>	<b>1 049 127</b>	<b>3 188 984</b>	<b>6 336 364</b>	<b>633 636</b>	<b>6 970 000</b>

## **9 Appendix**

**Appendix 1: Detailed maps of intervention sites and approach for the assessment of the interventions areas in the buffer zones.**

**Appendix 2: Project Organisational flow.**

**Appendix 3: List of GEF projects (IW, Biodiversity & Land Degradation) in the 4 countries and at regional scale.**

**Appendix 4: Activities schedule / project work plan - See Excel file.**

**Appendix 5: Detailed project budget - See Excel file.**

**Appendix 6: GEF tracking tools – See Excel files.**

**Appendix 7: Signed co-financing letters**

**Appendix 8: GEF Operational Focal Point Endorsement Letters**

**Appendix 9: ESMS clearance sheet**

**Appendix 10: Environmental and Social Management Plan**

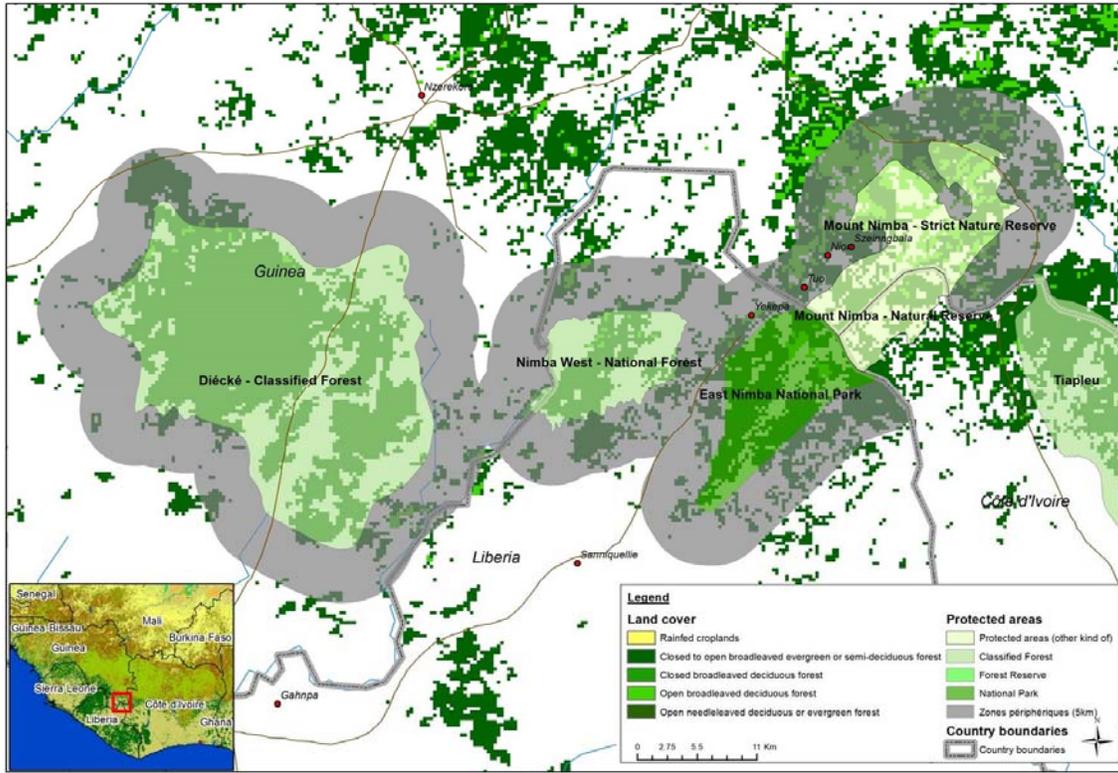
**Appendix 11: Social impact assessment report**

**Appendix 12: procurement plan**

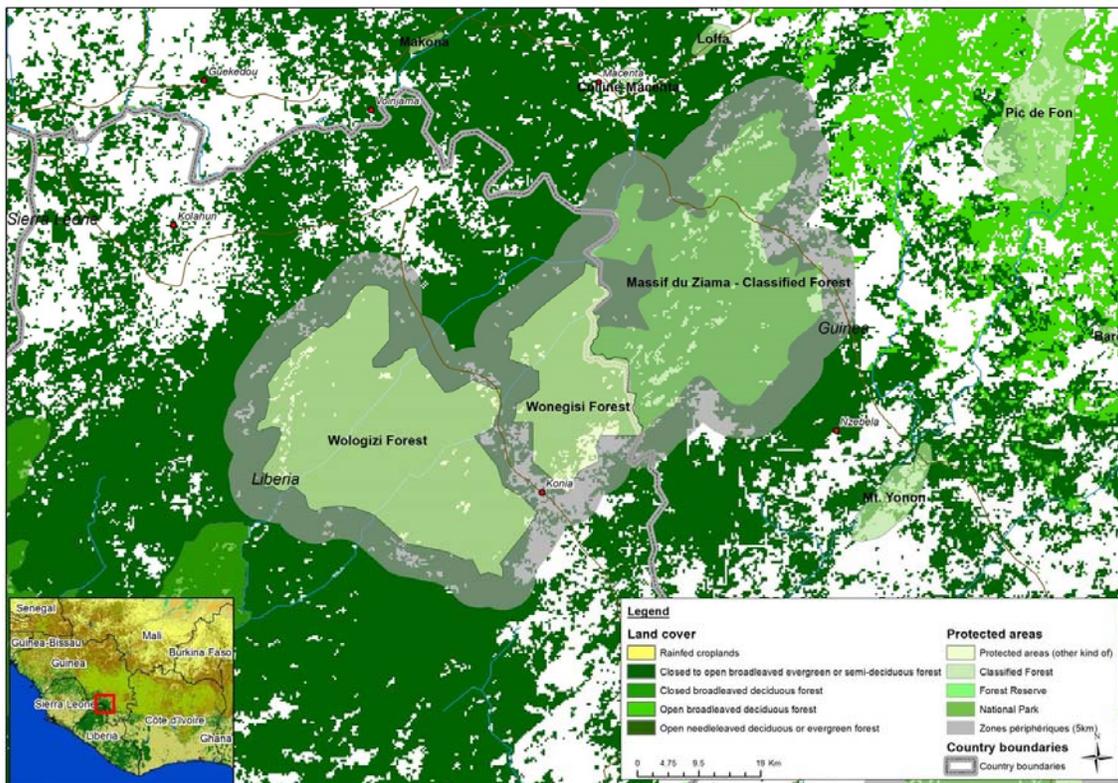
**Appendix 13: References and bibliography**

## Appendix 1: Detailed maps of intervention sites.

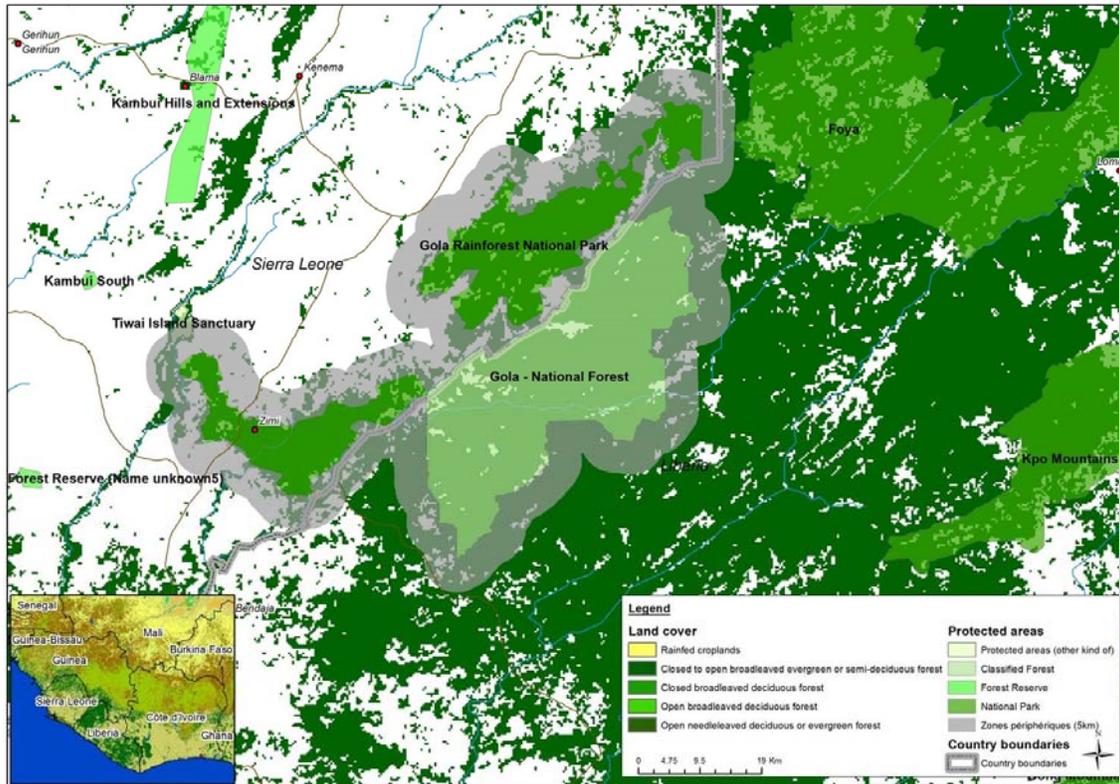
### Component 1. Site 1. Diéké-Nimba forest



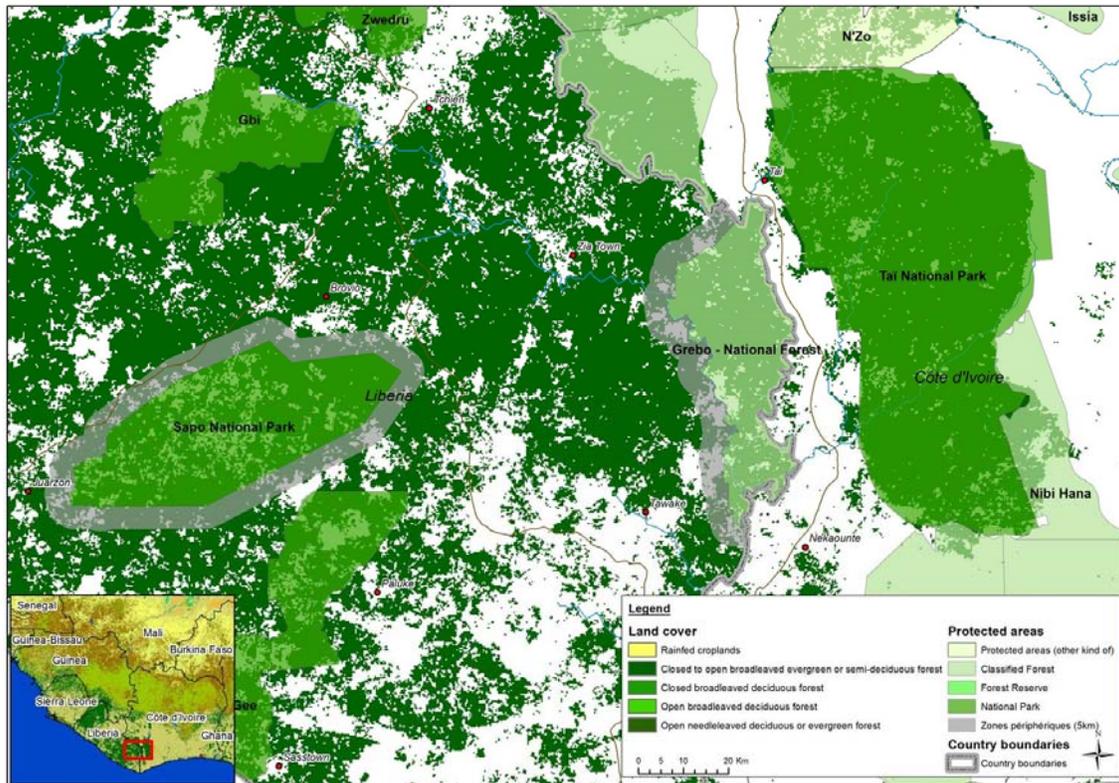
### Site 2. Wologizi-Wonegisi-Ziama forest



Site 3. Gola forest corridor



Site 4. Sapo-Grebo-Tai Corridor



*Detailed version of table 2: Intervention areas in the buffer zones of the targeted protected areas. Source: BRLi and ProtectedPlanet.net (UNEP-WCMC-IUCN).*

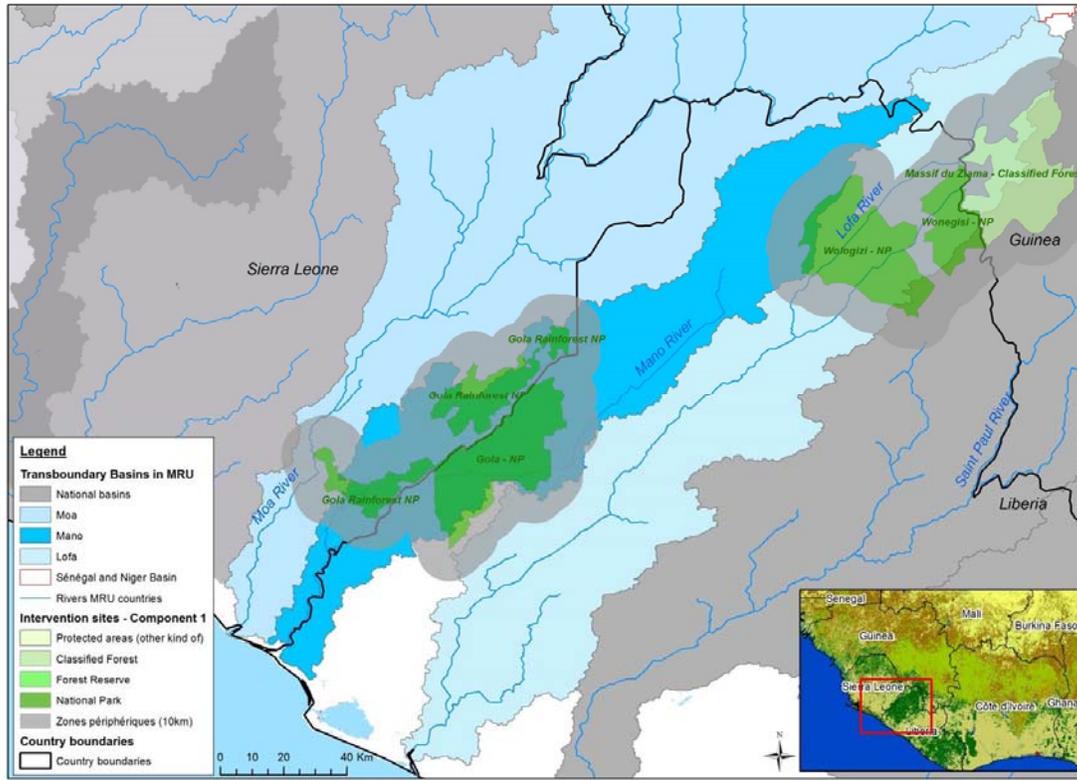
			Total	National portions			
				GN	LN	SL	CI
<b>Site 1 - Diecke National forest (GN), the Mt.Nimba Integrated Forest Reserves (GN/CI) and the East Nimba National Park (LB)</b>	Protected area	Surface [ha]	99 600	75 100	24 500	-	N/A
	Buffer Zone (5km)	Surface of the buffer zone [ha]	142 000	99 000	43 000	-	N/A
		Surface of the intervention area [ha]	<b>49 600</b>	<b>34 500</b>	<b>15 100</b>	-	N/A
		Equivalent of the surface of the intervention area, as a portion of the buffer zone [%]	35%	35%	35%	-	N/A
<b>Site 2 - Wonegisi-Ziama National forests (LB/GN)</b>	Protected area	Surface [ha]	233 800	93 400	140 400	-	N/A
	Buffer Zone (5km)	Surface of the buffer zone [ha]	188 000	78 000	110 000	-	N/A
		Surface of the intervention area [ha]	<b>43 800</b>	<b>27 400</b>	<b>16 400</b>	-	N/A
		Equivalent of the surface of the intervention area, as a portion of the buffer zone [%]	23%	35%	15%	-	N/A
<b>Site 3 - Gola Rainforest National Park (SL) and the Gola National Forest (LB)</b>	Protected area	Surface [ha]	171 900	-	99 600	72 300	N/A
	Buffer Zone (5km)	Surface of the buffer zone [ha]	194 000	-	79 000	115 000	N/A
		Surface of the intervention area [ha]	<b>73 200</b>	-	<b>15 800</b>	<b>57 400</b>	N/A
		Equivalent of the surface of the intervention area, as a portion of the buffer zone [%]	38%	-	20%	50%	N/A
<b>Site 4 - Sapo National Park (LB), the Grebo National Forest (LB) (without Tai NP)</b>	Protected area	Surface [ha]	254 600	-	254 600	-	N/A
	Buffer Zone (5km)	Surface of the buffer zone [ha]	152 000	-	152 000	-	N/A
		Surface of the intervention area [ha]	<b>15 200</b>	-	<b>15 200</b>	-	N/A
		Equivalent of the surface of the intervention area, as a portion of the buffer zone [%]	10%	-	10%	-	N/A

The on-the-ground interventions will be located in the 5-km buffer zone around the protected areas. Only a certain portion of the 5-km buffer zone of each site will be concerned by these interventions. The concerned portion of each site has been estimated to respect the financial pledge of the 3 countries and to ensure an even distribution of the activities between these countries (their pledge being equivalent). This approach also demonstrates how the project activities upscale the same kind of activities implemented by the baseline projects in the same areas and how incremental they are:

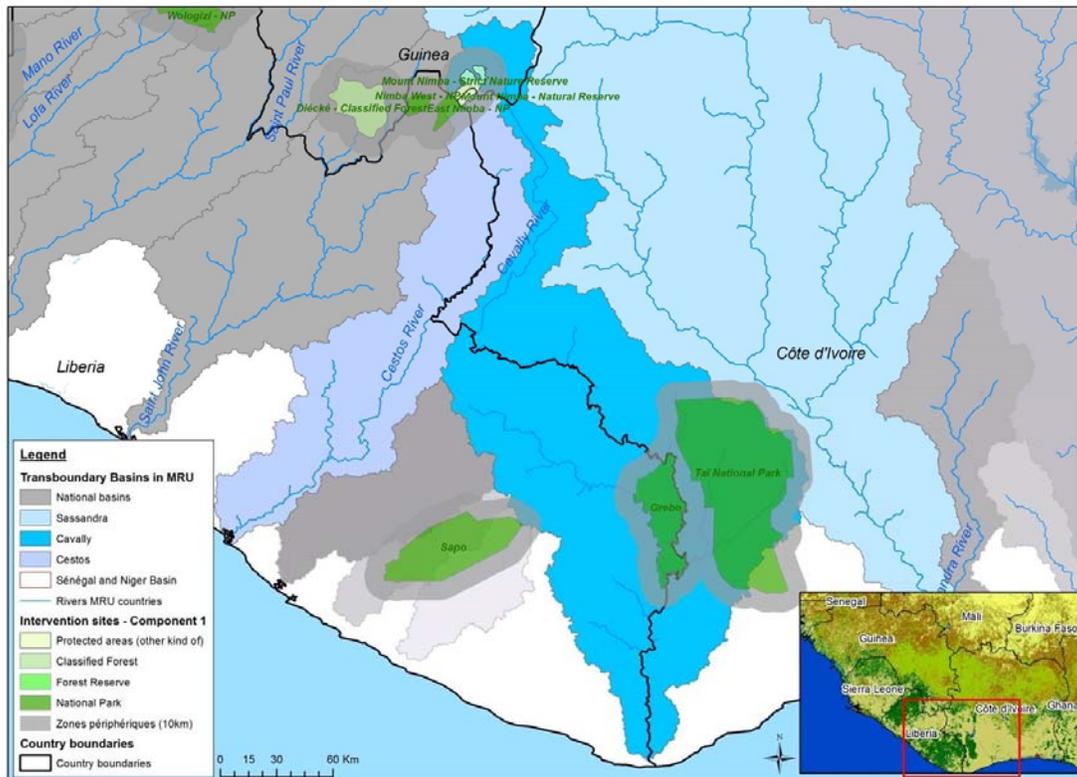
- Site 1: the project interventions will concern 35% of both the Guinean and the Liberian portions of the buffer zone of the Diecke National forest (GN), the Mt.Nimba Integrated Forest Reserves (GN/CI) and the East Nimba National Park (LB), for a total area of 49,600 ha;
- Site 2: the project interventions will concern 35% of the Guinean portion and 15% of the Liberian portion of the buffer zone of the Wonegisi-Ziama National forests (LB/GN), for a total area of 43,800 ha;
- Site 3: the project interventions will concern 20% of the Liberian portion and 50% of the Sierra Leonean portion of the buffer zone of the Gola Rainforest National Park (SL) and the Gola National Forest (LB), for a total area of 73,200 ha;
- Site 4: the project interventions will concern 10% of the buffer zone of Sapo National Park (LB), and Grebo National Forest (LB), for a total area of 15,200 ha.

**Component 2.**

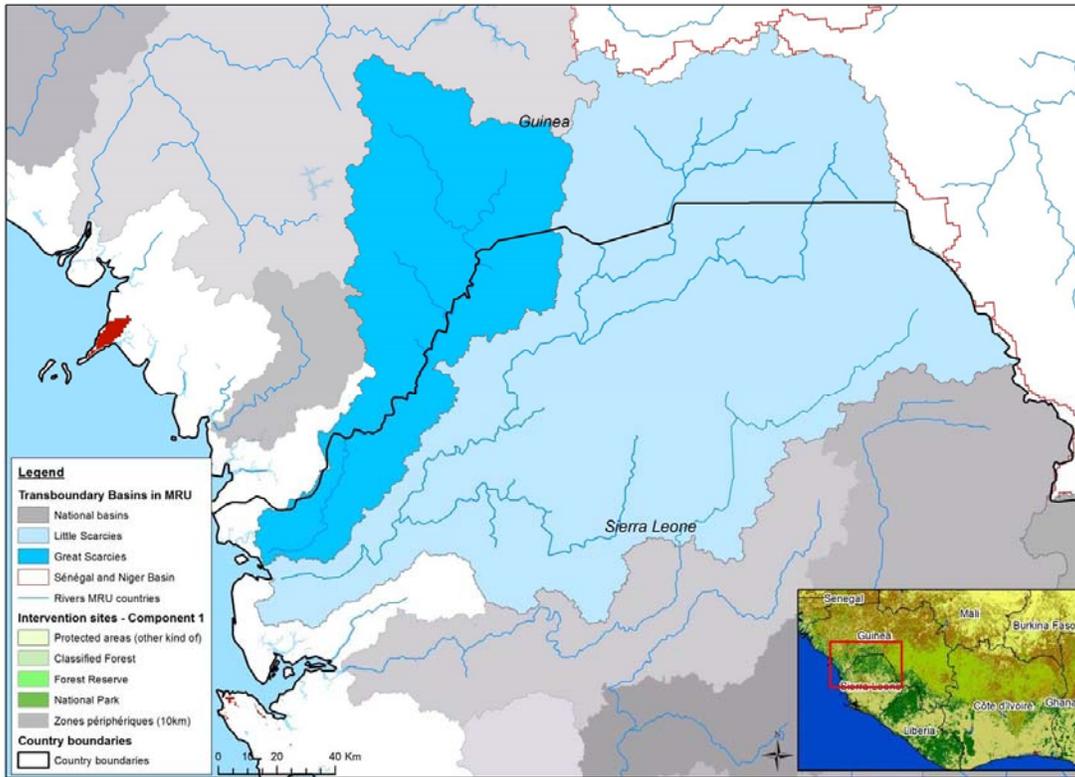
Target sub-basin 1: Moa-Makona river sub-basin



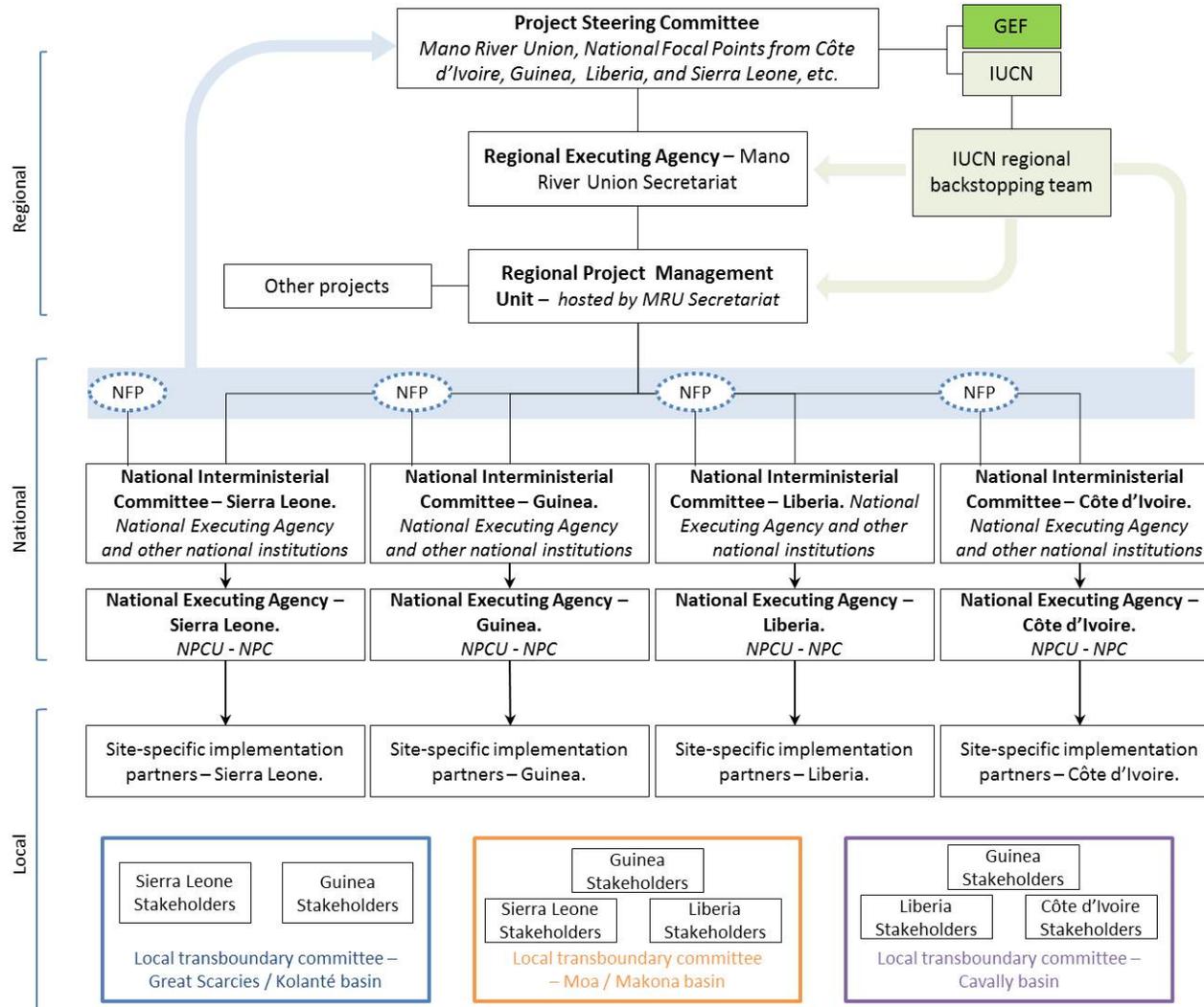
Target sub-basin 2: Cavally river sub-basin



Target sub-basin 3: Great Scarcies/Kolonté sub-basin



## Appendix 2: Project Organisational flow



**Appendix 3: List of GEF projects (IW, Land degradation & Biodiversity) in the 4 countries and at regional scale**

<u>GEF ID</u>	<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Focal Area</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Project Type</u>	<u>GEF Grant</u>	<u>Cofinancing</u>	<u>Status</u>
55	West Africa Pilot Community-Based Natural Resource and Wildlife Management	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	World Bank	FP	7,000,000	6,190,000	Project Closure
150	National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and the First National Report to the CBD	Biodiversity	Cote d'Ivoire	UNEP	EA	237,600	0	Project Closure
172	Biodiversity Country Studies - Phase I	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNEP	EA	5,000,000	801,000	Project Closure
252	National Biodiversity Strategy, and Action Plan and Country Report to the COP	Biodiversity	Guinea	UNDP	EA	223,020	0	Under Implementation
346	Control of Exotic Aquatic Weeds in Rivers and Coastal Lagoons to Enhance and Restore Biodiversity	Biodiversity	Cote d'Ivoire	UNDP	FP	3,000,000	1,900,000	Project Closure
406	African NGO-Government Partnership for Sustainable Biodiversity Action	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNDP	FP	4,330,000	7,120,000	Project Closure
465	Development of Best Practices and Dissemination of Lessons Learned for Dealing with the Global Problem of Alien Species that Threaten Biological Diversity	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNEP	MSP	750,000	3,233,000	Project Closure
536	Conservation Priority-Setting for the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystems, West Africa	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNDP	MSP	742,000	207,000	Project Closure
992	Assessment of Capacity-building Needs for Biodiversity, Participation in CHM and Prepration of Second National Report	Biodiversity	Cote d'Ivoire	UNEP	EA	94,500	40,000	Project Closure
1053	Sustainable Management of Globally Significant Endemic Ruminant Livestock of West Africa	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNDP	FP	10,000,000	19,593,000	Under Implementation
1139	Conservation of the Biodiversity of the Nimba Mountains through Integrated and Participatory Management	Biodiversity	Guinea	UNDP	FP	3,660,000	7,898,900	Under Implementation
1216	Building Scientific and Technical Capacity for Effective Management and Sustainable Use of Dryland Biodiversity in West African Biosphere Reserves	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNEP	FP	2,400,000	3,829,000	Project Completion
1224	Conservation and Sustainable Management of Below Ground Biodiversity, Phase I	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNEP	FP	5,022,646	3,576,739	Project Closure
1289	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and Country Report to the COP	Biodiversity	Sierra Leone	UNDP	EA	275,000	0	Under Implementation

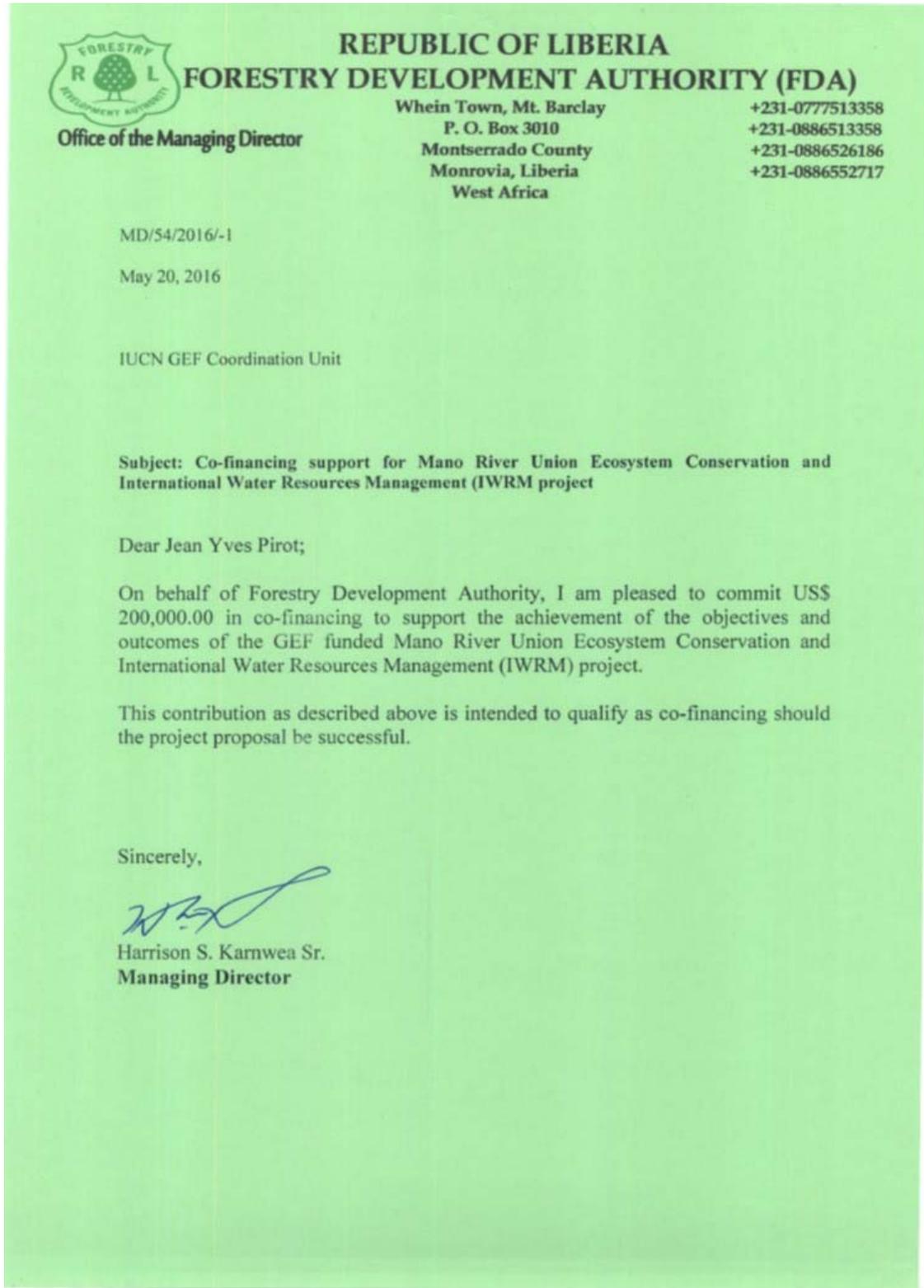
Mano River Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management – Project Document

1475	Establishing the Basis for Biodiversity Conservation on Sapo National Park and in South-East Liberia	Biodiversity	Liberia	World Bank	MSP	975,000	1,439,000	Project Completion
1552	Liberia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and Country Report to the COP	Biodiversity	Liberia	UNDP	EA	256,000	0	Under Implementation
1812	Identification of Capacity-Building Needs for BD Strategy Implementation and Strengthening of the CHM (Add on)	Biodiversity	Guinea	UNDP	EA	210,000	0	IA Approved
2342	Conservation and Sustainable Management of Below Ground Biodiversity, Tranche 2	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNEP	FP	4,007,124	7,438,678	Project Completion
2618	Biodiversity and Agricultural Commodities Program (BACP), Phase 1	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	World Bank	FP	7,000,000	11,674,000	Project Completion
2948	Biodiversity Conservation Project	Biodiversity	Sierra Leone	World Bank	FP	5,000,000	11,600,000	Under Implementation
3284	Consolidation of Liberia's Protected Area Network	Biodiversity	Liberia	World Bank	MSP	750,000	6,630,000	Project Completion
3413	Capacity Needs Assessment for the Implementation of Liberia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and Country Driven CHM Support	Biodiversity	Liberia	UNDP	EA	194,000	19,000	IA Approved
3533	Protected Area Project (Projet d'Appui a la Relance de la Conservation des Parcs et Reserves, PARC-CI)	Biodiversity	Cote d'Ivoire	World Bank	FP	2,540,000	19,543,596	Under Implementation
3781	SPWA-BD: Evolution of PA systems with regard to climate change in the West Africa Region	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNEP	FP	3,636,364	10,000,000	Under Implementation
3785	SPWA-BD: GEF Program in West Africa: Sub-component on Biodiversity	Biodiversity	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	World Bank	FP	0	0	Council Endorsed
3837	SPWA-BD: Biodiversity Conservation through Expanding the Protected Area Network in Liberia (EXPAN)	Biodiversity	Liberia	World Bank	MSP	950,000	9,168,000	Under Implementation
3984	SPWA-BD: Development of a Trans-frontier Conservation Area Linking Forest Reserves and Protected Areas in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire	Biodiversity	Cote d'Ivoire	FAO	MSP	859,090	1,200,000	Under Implementation
4105	SPWA-BD: Wetlands Conservation Project	Biodiversity	Sierra Leone	World Bank	FP	1,800,000	2,000,000	Under Implementation

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4667	National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Guinea	Biodiversity	Guinea	UNDP	EA	296,091	313,000	IA Approved
4693	Support to Cote d'Ivoire for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD	Biodiversity	Cote d'Ivoire	UNEP	EA	220,000	248,000	IA Approved
1093	Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends in the Niger River Basin	International Waters	Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea	World Bank	FP	13,000,000	16,902,000	Project Completion
1109	Senegal River Basin Water and Environmental Management Program	International Waters	Guinea	World Bank	FP	7,250,000	32,445,000	Project Closure
1111	Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area	International Waters	Cote d'Ivoire	UNEP	FP	5,347,380	10,374,400	Project Completion
5535	Improving IWRM, Knowledge based Management and Governance of the Niger Basin and the Iullemeden Taoudeni Tanezrouft Aquifer System (ITTAS)	International Waters	Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea	UNDP	FP	13,425,000	77,956,945	Council Approved
6964	Volta River Basin Strategic Action Programme Implementation Project	International Waters	Cote d'Ivoire	World Bank	FP	7,200,000	35,400,000	CEO Endorsed
1431	Fouta Djallon Highlands Integrated Natural Resources Management Project (FDH-INRM) (Tranches 1 and 2)	Land Degradation	Guinea	UNEP	FP	11,000,000	33,000,000	Under Implementation
1877	Community-based Land Management	Land Degradation	Guinea	World Bank	FP	7,000,000	34,400,000	Project Completion
4829	Support to GEF Eligible Parties for Alignment of National Action Programs and Reporting Process under UNCCD	Land Degradation	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNEP	FP	2,830,000	2,750,000	IA Approved
5788	Assessment of Land Degradation Dynamic in Coffee -Cocoa production and Northern Ivory Coast to promote SLM practices and Carbon Stock Conservation ALDD SLM CSC	Land Degradation	Cote d'Ivoire	UNEP	MSP	1,726,027	9,750,000	PIF Approved
1420	Reducing Dependence on POPs and other Agro-Chemicals in the Senegal and Niger River Basins through Integrated Production, Pest and Pollution Management	Multi Focal Area	Coted'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone	UNEP	FP	4,105,330	4,827,510	Under Implementation
4970	Integrated Management of Protected Areas in Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa	Multi Focal Area	Cote d'Ivoire	UNEP	FP	4,240,000	16,053,350	CEO Endorsed
5133	Senegal River Basin Climate Change Resilience Development Project	Multi Focal Area	Guinea	World Bank	FP	16,000,000	68,600,000	CEO Endorsed
5487	Integrated Development for Increased Rural Climate Resilience in the Niger Basin	Multi Focal Area	Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea	AfDB	FP	12,014,800	61,000,000	Council Approved

**Appendix 7: Signed co-financing letters**



MINISTÈRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT,  
DES EAUX ET FORÊTS



REPUBLIQUE DE GUINÉE  
Travail - Justice - Solidarité

N° 0465 /MEEF/CAB/.....20

Conakry, le 08 JUIN 2016

*La Ministre*

A Monsieur Jean Yves Pirot  
Unité de Coordination FEM de l'UICN

**Objet:** Co-financement du projet « Conservation des écosystèmes et gestion des ressources en eaux internationales de l'Union du Fleuve Mano »

Cher Monsieur,

Au nom du Centre Forestier de N'Zérékoré, j'ai le plaisir de commettre la somme de : **quarante-cinq million quatre cent quatre-vingt-six mille deux cent quatre-vingt-dix (45 486 290 S US)** de cofinancement du Gouvernement pour la réalisation des objectifs et résultats du projet « **Conservation des écosystèmes et gestion des ressources en eaux internationales de l'Union du Fleuve Mano** », financé par le FEM, dont :

- **1 251 000 S** pour la contribution en nature du Gouvernement (salaire du personnel et loyer des locaux devant abriter le siège du projet) ;
- **44 235 290 S** pour l'Agence Française de Développement qui finance les activités similaires du projet.

Cette contribution décrite ci-dessus est destinée à être qualifiée de cofinancement si la proposition de projet est approuvée.

Cordialement.



*Schump*  
Mme Kourouma Hadja Christine SAGNO

Lansébouyni - Coléah Commune de Matam BP: 761 Conakry - Rép. de Guinée  
Tél: (+224) 622 33 46 38 / 621 00 85 60 - E-mail: meef2014@yahoo.fr



Accra, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

IUCN GEF Coordination Unit

**Subject: Co-financing support for Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM project)**

Dear Jean Yves Pirot;

On behalf of the West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change program, I am pleased to inform you that an amount of \$10,000,000 USD will be invested as in-kind collaborative funding that will complement, support and leverage the goals, objectives and outcomes of the GEF funded Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) project.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as co-financing should the project proposal be successful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Stephen Kelleher'.

Stephen Kelleher,  
*Chief of Party*  
Tetra Tech ARD –  
West Africa Biodiversity & Climate Change (WABiCC)  
stephen.kelleher@wabicc.org

West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WABiCC) Program  
Post Office Box AN 7110  
Accra - North

**Physical Address:**  
House No. F 185/6, Second Labone Link,  
North Labone, Accra - Ghana

Tel: +233 (0)302 788 600 / 601  
Email: info@wabicc.org



# MANO RIVER UNION UNION DU FLEUVE MANO

Office of the Secretary-General

Ref: SG/MRU/341/016

Freetown, June 18, 2016

Mr AWAISS Aboubacar  
Regional Coordinator  
Water and Wetlands Programme  
IUCN Central and West Africa Programme  
01 BP 1618  
Ouagadougou 01  
Burkina Faso

Dear Sir,

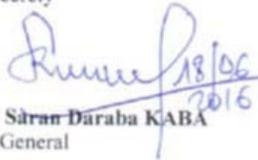
Mano River Union Secretariat Contribution to the Project - FEM Mano River

I have the pleasure to present the compliments of the Mano River Union(MRU) Secretariat and to thank the International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN) for its continued partnership with the Secretariat.

Within the overall framework of the Secretariat's commitment to natural resources management in the Mano River Union basin, I am pleased to submit our in-kind contribution to the Mano River Project on Conservation and Water Resources Management. The contribution covers the allocation MRU Secretariat staff time as well as logistics and services provided for the implementation of the project. It should also be noted that our commitment to the project will not only be limited to the above contribution, but the subsequent mobilisation of additional resources to ensure the full implementation of the project activities.

While counting on your usual cooperation, the Mano River Union Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the IUCN, the assurances of its esteemed consideration.

Yours Sincerely

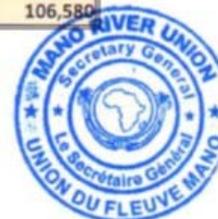
  
18/06  
2016

Amb. Dr. Saran Daraba KABA  
Secretary General



32s Fudia Terrace, Spur Loop, Freetown, Sierra Leone. PM Bag 133, Telephone:+232 (22)223834 (232)(22) 226883  
Website: [www.manoriverunion.int](http://www.manoriverunion.int)

 <b>MANO RIVER UNION</b> <b>UNION DU FLEUVE MANO</b> Office of the Secretary-General				
<b>PROJECT: FEM MANO RIVER</b> Mano River Union Secretariat Contribution				
Designation	Unit Cost (US\$)	Time on Project(%)	Period (Month)	Total (US\$)
<b>MRU Staff Time</b>				
Deputy Secretary General in Charge of Programme	8,000	15%	24	28,800
MRU Programme Officer	4,400	20%	24	21,120
MRU M&E Officer	4,400	20%	24	21,120
MRU Finance Associate	3,500	20%	24	16,800
MRU Driver	500	20%	24	2,400
<b>Sub Total</b>				<b>90,240</b>
<b>Logistics and Services</b>				
Office Space	3,750	10%	24	9,000
Furniture and Equipment(Lumsum)	5,000	-	-	5,000
Electricity	600	10%	12	720
Internet	1,350	10%	12	1,620
<b>Sub Total</b>				<b>16,340</b>
<b>Total MRU Contribution to Project</b>				<b>106,580</b>



MINISTRE DES EAUX ET FORETS

REPUBLIQUE DE COTE D'IVOIRE  
Union – Discipline - Travail

LE MINISTRE

- N° - 00 99 4 /MINEF/DGEF/DGPRE

Abidjan, le 17 JUIN 2016

A

Monsieur Jean Yves PIROT  
Directeur de l'Unité de Coordination du  
Fonds Mondial pour l'Environnement  
(FEM)  
Union Internationale pour la  
Conservation de la Nature (UICN)

**Objet :** Lettre de co-financement du Projet « *Conservation des écosystèmes et gestion internationale des ressources en eau de l'Union du fleuve Mano* »

**Monsieur le Directeur**

Je vous confirme l'engagement du Gouvernement de Côte d'Ivoire à co-financer à travers mon Département Ministériel, le Projet « *Conservation des écosystèmes et gestion internationale des ressources en eau de l'Union du fleuve Mano ID FEM : 4953* ».

Ce co-financement sera assuré par la mise à la disposition du projet, des locaux appropriés, des cadres et du personnel d'appui compétent, pour la réalisation des objectifs et résultats attendus si la proposition de projet est approuvée.

Veillez agréer, **Monsieur le Directeur**, l'assurance de ma considération distinguée.



*[Signature]*  
**Louis-André DACOURY-TABLEY**

## Appendix 8: GEF Operational Focal Point Endorsement Letters

 <i>Office of the Executive Director</i>	<p>REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA <b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY</b> P.O. Box 4024 4<sup>th</sup> Street Sinkor, Tubman Boulevard, 1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia</p>	
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**ED/EPA-01/0641/11/RL**

12 September, 2011

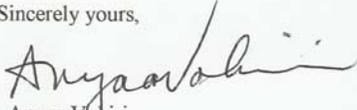
Mr. Tourino Soto, Ignacio  
GEF Executive Coordinator  
African Development Bank Group  
BP 323 – 1002 Tunis Belvedere - Tunisia

**Subject: Letter of Intent for the project “Mano River Forest Ecosystem and IWRM project” under GEFTF and SCCF**

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Liberia, I am pleased to provide this letter of intent for the above project.

The project has been presented and discussed at a workshop. I understand that the amounts requested for the project, covering four countries, are US\$473,000 from SCCF and US\$7,667,000 from LDCF TF, including US\$ 1,220,000 from International Waters. The total requested to Liberia is US\$1,705,000. We feel that this project will provide significant environmental and social benefits to our country as well as regional integration by promoting natural resource conservation and management.

Our country is currently involved in the preparation of a National Project Framework Document which will rank each project by priority. We will be pleased to provide an Endorsement letter once the NPDF is complete.

Sincerely yours,  
  
Anyaa Vohiri  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

<i>Mobile: +231 6518635</i>	<i>Fax 231 77523432</i>	<i>E-mail: vohiri@yahoo.com</i>
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MINISTRE DELEGUE A L'ENVIRONNEMENT,  
AUX EAUX ET FORETS



FEM - GEF

FONDS POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL  
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

REF: 012 /MDEEF/FSE/FEM/2011

Conakry, le 30 Dec 2011

## Le Directeur

( Point Focal Operationnel du FEM )

To: Mr Tourino Soto, Ignacio  
GEF Executive Coordinator  
African Development Bank Group  
BP 323 – 1002 Tunis Belvedere -Tunisia

**Subject: Endorsement for the project "Mano River Forest Ecosystem and IWRM project" under GEFTF**

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Guinea, I confirm that the above project proposal (a) is in accordance with the government's national priorities and the commitments made by Côte d'Ivoire under the relevant global environmental conventions and (b) has been discussed with relevant stakeholders, including the global environmental convention focal points, in accordance with GEF's policy on public involvement.

Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the objectives and strategies of the above project proposal with the support of AfDB. Further, I request the AfDB to provide a copy of the project document before submission to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement

The total financing from GEFTF being requested for this project is US\$ 1,586,750, inclusive of project preparation Grant (PPG) and Agency fees for project cycle management services associated with total GEF grant. I understand that the amount requested for the project, covering four countries, includes US\$ 1,000,000 from International Waters. The financing request for Guinea is detailed in the table below.

Funds	Agency	Focal area	Amount (in US dollar)		
			Financing	Fee	TOTAL
GEFTF	AfDB	Biodiversity	900,000	90,000	990,000
GEFTF	AfDB	Land Degradation	150,000	15,000	165,000
GEFTF	AfDB	SFM	350,000	35,000	385,000
GEFTF	AfDB	PPG	42,500	4,250	46,750
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,925,000</b>	<b>109,250</b>	<b>1,586,750</b>

I consent to the utilization of Guinea allocation in GEF-5 as defined in the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR).

Sincerely,



AHMADOU SEBORY TOURE

**Copy to:** Convention Focal Point for UNFCC  
Convention Focal Point for UNF CBD  
Convention Focal Point for UNFCCC

Kaloum Quartier Almamy BP: 2830  
Tél: 30 43 67 51 / 30 43 67 50 E-mail: fseguinée@yahoo.fr

MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉCONOMIE  
ET DES FINANCES

COMMISSION NATIONALE DU FONDS  
POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL (CNFEM)  
SECRETARIAT PERMANENT,  
POINT FOCAL OPERATIONNEL

REPUBLIQUE DE CÔTE D'IVOIRE  
Union - Discipline - Travail

Abidjan, le 20 Avril 2012

Réf. : ..... MEF/CNFEM/KAB/NNY

**Subject :** *Letter of endorsement for the project  
"Mano River Forest Ecosystem and IWRM  
project" under GEF TF and SCCF*

To

Mr Tourino Soto, Ignacio  
GEF Executive Coordinator  
African Development Bank Group  
BP 323 – 1002 Tunis Belvedere -Tunisia

GEF Focal area: International Waters

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Côte d'Ivoire, I am pleased to provide this letter of endorsement for the above project. I confirm that the above project proposal (a) is in accordance with the government's national priorities and the commitments made by Côte d'Ivoire under the relevant global environmental conventions and (b) has been discussed with relevant stakeholders, including the global environmental convention focal points, in accordance with GEF's policy on public involvement.

Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the objectives and strategies of the above project proposal with the support of AfDB. Further, I request the AfDB to provide a copy of the project document before submission to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement.

I understand that the total amount requested for the project to the GEF Trust Fund is US\$ 6,970,000 including US\$ 1,155,000 from International Waters while the remaining will be funded by the STAR allocation from Sierra-Leone, Liberia and Guinea. We feel that this project will provide significant environmental and social benefits to our country as well as regional integration by promoting natural resource conservation and management.

Sincerely,

**Ampliation :** – Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances  
– Présidente du FEM  
– Ministère de l'Environnement et  
du Développement durable



**KONE BAKAYOKO Alimata**  
Permanent, Secretary, GEF National Commission  
GEF Operational Focal Point, Côte d'Ivoire



**GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE**  
**ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, West Wing, Youyi Building  
Brookfields, Freetown  
Sierra Leone

14<sup>th</sup>, September, 2011

To: Mr Tourino Soto, Ignacio  
GEF Executive Coordinator  
African Development Bank Group  
BP 323 – 1002 Tunis Belvedere -Tunisia

**Subject:** *Endorsement for the project “Mano River Forest Ecosystem and IWRM project” under GEFTF*

In my capacity as GEF Operational Focal Point for Sierra Leone, I confirm that the above project proposal (a) is in accordance with the government’s national priorities and the commitments made by Sierra Leone under the relevant global environmental conventions and (b) has been discussed with relevant stakeholders, including the global environmental convention focal points, in accordance with GEF’s policy on public involvement.

Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the objectives and strategies of the above project proposal with the support of AfDB. Further, I request the AfDB to provide a copy of the project document before submission to the GEF Secretariat for CEO endorsement

I understand that the amounts requested for the project, covering four countries is US\$7,667,000 from GEF TF, including US\$ 1,220,000 from International Waters. The total requested to Sierra Leone is US\$1,586,750 as detailed in the table below:



Funds	Agency	Focal area	Amount (in US dollar)		
			Financing	Fee	TOTAL
GEFTF	AfDB	Biodiversity	900,000	90,000	990,000
GEFTF	AfDB	Land Degradation	150,000	15,000	165,000
GEFTF	AfDB	SFM	350,000	35,000	385,000
GEFTF	AfDB	PPG	42,500	4,250	46,750
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,442,500</b>	<b>144,250</b>	<b>1,586,750</b>

Sincerely,



Kolleh Alusine Bangura (Dr)  
Director, Environment Protection Agency

Copy to: Mr Denis Lansana Focal Point for UNFCC  
Mr Momodu Bah Focal Point for UNF CBD  
Mr Cyril Jusu Focal Point for UNFCCD



**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY**  
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

**Naoko Ishii**  
CEO and Chairperson

July 8, 2015

Mr. Mahamat Assouyouli  
GEF Coordinator  
African Development Bank  
01 B.P. 1387 Abidjan  
Cote D'Ivoire

Ms. Sendashonga Cyrille  
Global Director  
International Union for Conservation of Nature  
Rue Mauverney, 28  
CH - 1196 Gland  
Switzerland

Dear Mr. Assouyouli and Ms. Cyrille:

This letter supersedes the CEO Concurrence Letter on Agency transfer dated July 8, 2015 for the same project cited below. This letter includes the PPG and PPG fee to be transferred to IUCN.

With regards to the AfDB's request of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 for the transfer of the full-sized project entitled: "*Regional (Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone): Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project*" – *GEF ID 4953*, I have reviewed the circumstances that have led to this request for change of implementing agency. With IUCN's readiness to take over the development and implementation of the project and with the concurrence of the participating countries' Operational Focal Points, I find your justification acceptable and, therefore, approve the proposed project transfer. I expect continued close coordination among the concerned GEF Agencies and partners to develop and implement this project.

Last Project Status:	Council Approved
GEFSEC ID:	4953
Transferring Agency:	AfDB
Receiving Agency:	IUCN
Focal Area:	Multi Focal Area
Project Type:	Full-sized Project
Country(ies):	Regional (Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone)
Name of Project:	Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project
GEF Project Grant:	\$6,336,364
Agency Fee:	\$633,636
Undisbursed GEF Project Grant to be transferred to IUCN:	\$6,336,364
Undisbursed Agency Fee to be transferred to IUCN:	\$633,636

1818 H Street, NW • Washington, DC 20433 • USA  
Tel: +1 (202) 473 3202 - Fax: +1 (202) 522 3240  
E-mail: [gefeco@thegef.org](mailto:gefeco@thegef.org)  
[www.thegef.org](http://www.thegef.org)

Mr. Assouyouiti and Ms. Cyrie

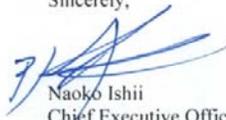
- 2 -

July 8, 2015

PPG:	\$250,000
PPG Fee:	\$25,000
Undisbursed PPG to be transferred to IUCN:	\$250,000
Undisbursed PPG Fee to be transferred to IUCN:	\$25,000
Funding Source:	GEF Trust Fund

I have also noted that this FSP is now already 36 months since Council PIF Approval on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and belongs to the stock of overdue projects that are subject to the one-time cancellation by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016, as approved by Council in the June 2015 Council Meeting. Please expedite the preparation of the project so that it can be endorsed as soon as possible but no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2016.

Sincerely,



Naoko Ishii  
Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson

Attachment: AfDB's letter dated 27 May 2015, AfDB's notification on project transfer,  
Minute of Teleconference between AfDB, IUCN, and OFPs dated 4 May 2015  
Copy to: Country Operational Focal Points, GEF Agencies, Trustee

## Appendix 9: ESMS clearance sheet

### I. Project Data

Project Title:	Mano River Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project		
Project proponent:	IUCN PACO		
Country:	Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ivory Coast	Project number:	
Estimated start date and duration:		Budget (CHF):	
ESMS Screening is	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (1) required because the project budget is $\geq$ CHF 500,000 <input type="checkbox"/> (2) required – despite being a small project (< CHF 500,000) the project proponent has identified risks when completing the ESMS Questionnaire <input type="checkbox"/> (3) not required because the project budget is < CHF 500,000 and the project proponent has not identified any risks when completing the ESMS Questionnaire		
	Name and function of individual representing project proponent		Date
ESMS Questionnaire completed by:	Dr. Kai Schmidt-Soltau	IUCN, SIA Consultant	May 13, 2016
IUCN Reviewer:	Linda Klare	ESMS Coordinator	June 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2016
	Gonzalo Oviedo	Senior Advisor Social Policy	June 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2016
Documents submitted for screening/clearance:			

ESMS Clearance of Project Proposal: Rating and Conclusion	
<b>Risk category:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> low risk <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moderate risk <input type="checkbox"/> high risk <input type="checkbox"/> TBD
<input type="checkbox"/> Cleared	<i>The conclusions are positive and the project proposal meets all requirements with regards to avoiding or reducing environmental and social risks: the proposal is accepted.</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conditionally cleared	<i>The conclusions call for improving one or more ESMS activities and/or for important re-formulation of some mitigation measures. This will lead to the proposal being conditionally cleared; the reviewer will provide guidance on the way forward.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Clearance rejected	<i>Essential ESMS provisions have not been complied with, critical mitigation measures have not been incorporated or don't seem feasible or sufficient for avoiding or minimizing impacts; or significant data gaps still prevail and additional field assessments are required.</i>

<b>Rational, including summary key findings checklist, and recommendations:</b>	<p>The project promotes sustainable management of forest and water resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem. Forest ecosystem management is improved by promoting the restoration of productivity of tree-based systems and by developing integrated land use plans. However, low to moderate impacts on the livelihood of local communities might be expected as some of the measures for protected areas such as (re-)classification and zoning or protected areas and development of integrated land use plans might involve restricting access to forest resources. The type and magnitude of these restrictions and their impact on livelihood can only be determined during project implementation when the restrictions are established. Until the significance of this has been determined the project is conservatively classified as moderate risk project.</p> <p>A process is laid out below in case significant impacts of access restrictions have been identified, including the development of an Action plan for Mitigating Impacts from Access Restrictions.</p> <p>Other impacts are considered minor, some are still to be determined at the begin of project implementation upon availability of project site data</p> <p>The project is conditionally cleared; assessment results and reports indicated below are to be submitted to IUCN.</p>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## II. ESMS Questionnaire

Potential impacts related to ESMS standards			
Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions			
	To be completed by project proponent		IUCN ESMS Reviewer
	Yes, no, n/a	If yes, describe potential issues, specify activities causing this and measures for preventing or minimising adverse impacts (if applicable)	Comments, additional considerations
1. Will / might the project involve physical relocation or resettlement of people? <b>if yes, answer a-b below</b>	No		
a. Describe the project activities that require resettlement?			
b. Have alternative project design options for avoiding resettlement been rigorously considered?			
2. Does the project include activities that involve restricting access to land or natural resources or changes in the use and management of natural resources? (e.g., establishing new restrictions, strengthening enforcement capacities through training, infrastructure, equipment or other means, promoting village patrolling etc.; <b>if yes, answer a-g below</b>	yes		
3. Does the project include activities that involve changes in the use and management regimes of natural resources? <b>if yes, answer a-g below</b>	yes		
4. Does the project create situations that make physical access more difficult to livelihood resources (e.g. to multiple use zones, to schools or medical services etc.)? <b>if yes, answer a-g below</b>	TBD		
Answer only if you answered yes to items 2, 3, or 4.			
a. Describe project activities that involve restrictions.	yes	Community forest and agroforestry establishment plantation	The following 3 activities might involve elements of access restrictions:  Activity 1.15 includes procurement of park/ field equipment at each site, purchase premium to support park surveillance and funding concrete protection measures on the ground. Activity 1.16: Produce formal recommendations for legal (re)classification and zoning of identified priority forest areas; Activity 1.17: Negotiate integrated land use plans in a participatory way with stakeholders and target groups; negotiate and sign

			<p>conservation agreements with performance based appraisals, focus restricted access to protected areas and stop encroachment, procure field equipment and material at each site</p> <p>However, at this point the sites, types and magnitude of access restrictions measures are not known; they will only be determined during project implementation.</p>
b. Explain the project's level of influence: will it define restrictions, put in place restrictions, strengthen enforcement capacities or promote restrictions indirectly (e.g., through awareness building measures or policy advice)?		Through the establishment of management plans and management systems	<p>1.15: The project strengthens enforcement capacities by providing equipment and funding concrete protection measures – <b>potential for direct access restrictions</b></p> <p>1.16: formal recommendations for legal (re)classification and zoning of identified priority forest areas are produced by the project; the formal adoption of the recommendations is done by the authorities and outside the project's influence – <b>potential for indirect access restrictions</b></p> <p>1.17: integrated land use plans are negotiated through specific negotiation workshops organized two times every year at each site leading to signed Conservation agreements - <b>potential for direct access restriction but agreed with stakeholders</b></p>
c. Has the existing legal framework regulating land tenure and access to natural resource (incl. traditional rights) been analysed, broken down by different groups including women, if applicable?	No		A high-level analysis has been provided in the socio-economic assessment but this needs to be complemented by a more detailed analysis once the final sites have been selected. This should include an analysis practice followed in each sites. Results from the analysis of land rights will be important to understand whether the mitigation measures are accessible by affected groups (e.g. if groups affected by access restrictions have access to land and can hence benefit from mitigation measures / training in improved agricultural practices).
d. Explain whether the country's existing laws recognise traditional rights for land and natural resources; are there any groups at the project site whose rights are not recognised?	No	It recognises it only on request and following a rather lengthy process	A high-level analysis has been provided in the socio-economic assessment but this needs to be complemented with on-site data.
e. Have the implications of the access restriction measures on people's livelihoods been analysed, by social group? If yes, describe the groups affected by restrictions. Distinguish social groups (incl. vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples) and men and women.	No		A high-level analysis has been provided in the socio-economic assessment but this needs to be complemented with on-site data once types of access restrictions are determined.
f. Will the project include measures to minimise adverse impacts or to compensate for loss of access?	TBD	Participatory management and inclusion of the entire population into the group of beneficiaries	<p>Integrated land use plans will be developed in a participatory way with stakeholders and target groups; in this process stakeholder will be able to identify potential negative livelihood impacts and voice their concerns.</p> <p>The project intends further to enable the generation of sustainable income from tree products and services (including through certification schemes) which will mitigate and partly compensate for impacts from loss of access to resources. However, there might be a need to more strictly tailoring these benefits to the group affected by restrictions (once negative impacts from access restrictions</p>

			have been confirmed.
g. Has any process been started or implemented to obtain free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) from groups affected by restrictions?	No		This will be part of the negotiations carried out during project implementation (activity 1.17) on case negative impacts from access restrictions have been confirmed.
5. Is there a risk that the project might affect current land tenure arrangements or community-based property rights to resources, land, or territories through measures other than access restrictions – with negative impacts on people or groups?	No		
6. Has any project partner in the past been involved in activities related to forced eviction, resettlement or access restrictions?	yes	Most of the conservation NGOs and the national agencies in charge of protected areas	
<b>Standard triggered? “Yes / No / TBD” Explain why</b>	Yes	Activities that involve elements of access restrictions are described in question 4.a. However, the sites, types and magnitude of access restrictions measures will only be determined during project implementation. It is hence not possible at this point to fully judge expected impacts on livelihoods and as such determine the applicability of the Standard.	
<b>Have measures for avoiding impacts already been considered? Are they sufficient?</b> <b>Are assessments required to better understand the impacts and identify mitigation measures? What specific topics are to be assessed?</b>	<p>As strategy for mitigating livelihood impacts from access restrictions the project will enable sustainable income through training people in agroforestry practices and by linking them to certification schemes in order to assure a more effective marketing of their produce.</p> <p>Given the lack of clarity on the type of restrictions, decisions about the Standard’s applicability and need for mitigation measures is postponed to project implementation. The below described process needs to be followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determination of types of access restriction measures implemented in each site;</li> <li>• As part of activity 1.14 (gathering information on human populations, socio-economic dynamics and impacts on livelihoods) an assessment about negative impacts on livelihoods from access restriction measures needs to be undertaken (following the instructions provided in the Guidance Note on Social Impact Assessment); this includes filling the data gaps pointed out above. This will allow identification of the groups affected by access restrictions and an assessment of the magnitude of impacts. Results of this step need to be reported to IUCN;</li> <li>• In case significant impacts are confirmed an Action Plan for Mitigating Impacts from Access Restrictions needs to be developed (see Guidance Note provided by IUCN); this will require, among others, developing mitigating measures (in consultation with affected groups) and</li> </ul>		

	obtaining FPIC from affected groups; the Action Plan needs to be submitted to IUCN for approval.
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Standard on Indigenous Peoples <sup>8</sup>			
		<b>To be completed by project proponent</b>	<b>IUCN ESMS Reviewer</b>
	Yes, no, n/a	<i>If yes, describe potential issues, specify activities causing this and measures for preventing or minimising adverse impacts (if applicable)</i>	<i>Comments, additional considerations</i>
1. Is the project located in an area inhabited by indigenous peoples, tribal peoples or other traditional peoples? <b>If yes, answer questions a-j</b>	TBD		The Manu River Union Forests are home and provide livelihoods for around 10 million people from more than 100 different ethnic groups. Information available at this point does not indicate that some of these ethnic groups belong specifically to indigenous peoples groups; hence applicability of the Standard cannot be assessed at this moment. However, a more detailed analysis is being undertaken as part of project implementation (activity 1.14). Based on the findings from this analysis the applicability of the Standard will be reviewed again. If applicability is confirmed the questions below will guide risk identification and development of mitigation measures.
2. If indigenous peoples do not occupy land within the project's geographical area, could the project still present risks that might affect their rights and livelihood? <b>If yes, answer questions a-j</b>			
Answer only if you answered yes to 1 or 2 above.			
a. How does the host country's Government refer to these groups (e.g., indigenous peoples, minorities, tribes etc.)?			
b. How do these groups identify themselves?			

<sup>8</sup>The coverage of indigenous peoples includes: (i) peoples who identify themselves as "indigenous" in strict sense; (ii) tribal peoples whose social, cultural, and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations; and (iii) traditional peoples not necessarily called indigenous or tribal but who share the same characteristics of social, cultural, and economic conditions that distinguish them from other sections of the national community, whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions, and whose livelihoods are closely connected to ecosystems and their goods and services

c. Name the groups; distinguish, if applicable, the geographical areas of their presence and influence (including the areas of resource use) and how these relate to the project site.			
d. Is there a risk that the project affects indigenous peoples' livelihood through access restrictions? While this is covered under the Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions, if yes, please specify the indigenous groups affected.		This is not envisaged, but there is a risk of economic displacement and restricted access to resources if the project benefits are captured by local elites	
e. Is there a risk that the project affects indigenous peoples' material or non-material livelihoods in ways other than access restrictions (e.g., in terms of self-determination, cultural identity, values and practices)?			
f. Is there a risk that the project affects specific vulnerable groups within indigenous communities (for example, women, girls, elders)?			
g. Does the project involve the use or commercial development of natural resources on lands or territories claimed by indigenous peoples?			
h. Does the project intend to use the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples?			
i. Has any process been started or implemented to achieve the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of indigenous peoples to activities directly affecting their lands/territories/resources?			
j. Are opportunities considered to provide benefits for indigenous peoples? If yes, is it ensured that this is done in a culturally appropriate and gender inclusive way?			
k. Are some of the indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation? If yes, how have they been consulted? How are their rights respected?			
<b>Standard triggered? "Yes / No / TBD" Explain why</b>	TBD	The Manu River Union Forests are home and provide livelihoods for around 10 million people from more than 100 different ethnic groups. Information available at this point does not indicate that some of these ethnic groups belong specifically to indigenous peoples groups; hence applicability of the Standard cannot be assessed at this moment.	
<b>Have measures for avoiding impacts already been considered? Are they sufficient?</b> <b>Are assessments required to better understand the impacts and identify mitigation measures? What specific topics are to be assessed?</b>	A more detailed analysis needs to be undertaken as part of project implementation (activity 1.14). Based on the findings from this analysis the applicability of the Standard will be reviewed again. If applicability is confirmed the questions below will guide risk identification and development of mitigation measures.		

Standard on Biodiversity and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources			
	Yes, no, n/a	<b>To be completed by project proponent</b>	<b>IUCN ESMS Reviewer</b>
		<i>If yes, describe potential issues, specify activities causing this and measures for preventing or minimising adverse impacts (if applicable)</i>	<i>Comments, additional considerations</i>
1. Is the project located in or near areas legally protected or officially proposed for protection including reserves according to IUCN Protected Area Management Categories I - VI, UNESCO Natural World Heritage Sites, UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands? <b>If yes, answer questions a-d</b>	yes	In is located in the buffer zone around 12 protected areas	
2. Is the project located in or near to areas recognised for their high biodiversity value and protected as such by indigenous peoples or other local users? <b>If yes, answer questions a-d</b>	No		
3. Is the project located in/near to areas which are not covered in existing protection systems but identified by authoritative sources for their high biodiversity value <sup>9</sup> ? <b>If yes, answer questions a-d</b>	Yes	several	KBAs including important bird areas
Answer only if you answered yes to items 1, 2, or 3 above.			
a. If the project aims to establish or expand the protected area (PA), is there a risk of adverse impacts on natural resources on areas beyond the PA?	N/A		
b. If the project aims at changing management of a PA, is there a risk of adverse direct and indirect impacts on other components of biodiversity?	No		No, the project's main objective is to improve biodiversity and applies sound best practices in PA management.
c. If the project plans any infrastructure for PA management or visitor use (e.g., watch tower, tourism facilities, access roads), is there a risk of adverse impacts on biodiversity, (consider the construction and use phases)?	N/A		

<sup>9</sup> Areas important to threatened species according to IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, important to endemic or restricted-range species or to migratory and congregatory species; areas representing key evolutionary processes, providing connectivity with other critical habitats or key ecosystem services; highly threatened and/or unique ecosystems (e.g. to be determined in future by the evolving IUCN Red List of Ecosystems); areas identified as Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) and subsets such as important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs), important Plant Areas (IPAs), important Sites for Freshwater Biodiversity or Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites.

d. If the project promotes ecotourism, is there a risk of adverse impacts to biodiversity, e.g., due to water/waste disposal, disturbance of flora/fauna, overuse of sites, slope erosion etc.)?	N/A		
4. Will the project introduce or translocate species as a strategy for species conservation or ecosystem restoration (e.g. erosion control, dune stabilisation or reforestation)? <b>If yes, answer questions a-c</b>	No		
5. Does the project involve plantation development or production of living natural resources (e.g., agriculture, animal husbandry or aquaculture)? <b>If yes, answer questions a-c</b>	yes	Agroforestry development	
Answer only if you answered yes to items 4 or 5 above.			
a. Does this project involve non-native species or is there a risk of introducing non-native species inadvertently? If yes, is there a risk that these species might develop invasive behaviour? Have precautions been taken to avoid risks?	No		The main outcome of the project is to identify the land practices that conserve and promote native forest trees species in restored, multi-functional landscapes guided by the objective to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functionality. There are no plans to introduce non-native species. However, there is always a risk of introducing non-native species by accident, during processes of restoration. This happens through non rigorous protocols in germplasm transfer from one country to country. Therefore the project needs to ensure that during the actual implementation stages, Protocols for Germplasm procurement are rigorously respected.
b. Is there a risk that the project might create other pathways for spreading invasive species (e.g. through creation of corridors, introduction of facilitatory species, import of commodities, tourism or movement of boats)? Have precautions been taken to avoid risks?	TBD		Same as above (question a)
c. Have or will potential adverse impacts on people's livelihood been analysed and precautions taken to avoid risks?	TBD		Not yet, but the choice of agroforestry tree species is guided by the objective to provide benefits for the farmers. So, no risk is expected.
6. Is there a risk that the project negatively affects water flows on-site or downstream (including increases or decreases in peak and flood flows and low flows) through extraction, diversion or containment of surface or ground water (e.g., through dams, reservoirs, canals, levees, river basin developments, groundwater extraction) or through other activities?	No		There is no risk expected that project activities affect water flows in a negative way. All decisions about the use of water resources will be based on the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis where environmental impacts will be determined undertaken by qualified experts.
7. Will the project affect water dynamics, river connectivity or the hydrological cycle in ways other than direct changes of water flows (e.g., water infiltration and aquifer recharge, sedimentation)? Also consider reforestation projects as originators of such impacts.	No		There is no risk expected that project activities affect water flows in a negative way. All decisions about the use of water resources will be based on the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis undertaken by qualified experts.
8. Is there a risk that the project will affect water quality of waterways (e.g., through diffuse water pollution from	No		

agricultural run-off or other activities)?			
9. Is there a risk that the project will affect ecosystem functions and services not covered above, in particular those on which local communities depend for their livelihoods?	TBD		
10. Does the project promote the use of living natural resources (e.g., by proposing production systems or harvest plans)? If yes, is there a risk that this will lead to unsustainable use of resources?	No		No, on the contrary; the aim of the project is to develop sustainable production practices and promote their adoption through a certification system. The certification system provides verification of adherence to practices.
11. Does the project intend to use pesticides, fungicides or herbicides (biocides)? <b>If yes, answer questions a-b</b>	TBD		It is not expected that chemical enhancers are used; restoration interventions are extensive, not intensive; they will use locally adapted species; and opportunities are often highest where there is little competition for land use. However, in cases of assisted natural regeneration or enrichment planting, there may be need for protection of trees from browsing animals or for organic manure to stimulate rapid growth of planted trees so they are not dominated..
a. Have alternatives to the use of biocides been rigorously considered or tested?			
b. Has a pest management plan been established?			
12. Does the project intend to use biological pest management techniques that might risk affecting biodiversity?	No		All practices promoted by the project aim at enhancing biodiversity.
13. Is there a risk that the project will cause adverse environmental impacts in a wider area of influence (landscape/ watershed, regional or global levels) including transboundary impacts?	No		The impacts are expected to be positive.
14. Is there a risk that consequential developments triggered by the project will have adverse impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services? Is there a risk of adverse cumulative impacts generated together with other known or planned projects in the sites?	No		
<b>Standard triggered? “Yes / No / TBD” Explain why</b>	Yes	The Standard is triggered because there is a low risk of an inadvertent introduction of non-native species.	
<b>Have measures for avoiding impacts already been considered? Are they sufficient?</b> <b>Are assessments required to better understand the impacts and identify mitigation measures? What specific topics are to be assessed?</b>		As explained above, these risks can be well managed by rigorously respecting protocols for Germplasm procurement.	

<b>Standard on Cultural Heritage</b>			
	<b>To be completed by project proponent</b>		<b>IUCN ESMS Reviewer</b>
	Yes, no, n/a	<i>If yes, describe potential issues, specify activities causing this and measures for preventing or minimising adverse impacts (if applicable)</i>	<b>Comments, additional considerations</b>
1. Is the project located in or near a site officially designated or proposed as a cultural heritage site (e.g., UNESCO World Cultural or Mixed Heritage Sites, or Cultural Landscapes) or a nationally designated site for cultural heritage protection?	Yes		The Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve is a Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site (in danger)
2. Does the project area harbour cultural resources such as tangible, movable or immovable cultural resources with archaeological, historical, cultural, artistic, religious, spiritual or symbolic value for a nation, people or community (e.g., burial sites, buildings, monuments or cultural landscapes)?	TBD		
3. Does the project area harbour a natural feature or resource with cultural, spiritual or symbolic significance for a nation, people or community associated with that feature (e.g., sacred natural sites, ceremonial areas or sacred species)?	TBD		
4. Will the project involve infrastructure development or small civil works such as roads, levees, dams, slope restoration, landslides stabilisation or buildings such as visitor centre, watch tower?	No		
5. Will the project involve excavation or movement of earth, flooding or physical environmental changes (e.g., as part of ecosystem restoration)?	No		
6. Is there a risk that physical interventions described in items 4–5 might affect known or unknown (e.g., buried) cultural resources?	No		
7. Does the project plan to restrict local users' access to known cultural resources or natural features with cultural, spiritual or symbolic significance?	TBD		This might potentially be the case when restricting physical access to PA. This is only known upon classification/zoning. Access restrictions might affect cultural practices of communities, ritual use of forests or waters, ceremonial activities the collection of medicinal plants etc.
8. Will the project promote the use or development of economic benefits from cultural resources or natural features with cultural significance?	No		
<b>Standard triggered? “Yes / No / TBD” Explain why</b>	TBD	While the site could potentially harbour cultural resources, given that the project does not involve infrastructure development, civil works or other activities that involve excavation or movement of earth there are no obvious risk of damaging resources.	

		It cannot be fully excluded, however, whether access restriction might affect communities in their cultural practices.
<p><b>Have measures for avoiding impacts already been considered? Are they sufficient?</b></p> <p><b>Are assessments required to better understand the impacts and identify mitigation measures? What specific topics are to be assessed?</b></p>	Required actions:	When developing land use plans and determining access restriction the potential of adverse impacts as described in question 7 need to be assessed.

Other social or environmental impacts			
Other social impacts			
	<i>To be completed by project proponent</i>		<i>IUCN ESMS Reviewer</i>
	<i>Yes, no, n/a</i>	<i>If yes, describe potential issues, specify activities causing this and measures for preventing or minimising adverse impacts (if applicable)</i>	<i>Comments, additional considerations</i>
1. Is there a risk that the project affects human rights (e.g., right to self-determination, to education, to health, or cultural rights) – other than those of indigenous peoples which are dealt with in the previous standard? Differentiate between women and men, where applicable.	No		
2. Is there a risk that the project creates or aggravates inequalities between women and men or adversely impacts the situation or livelihood conditions of women or girls?	No		<p>Women are important users of forest resources. Access restriction to forest resources (e.g. fire wood) might affect them more strongly than men.</p> <p>Women are also important users of water resources. Strategic Action Programmes (SAP) for the protection and the management of the transboundary water resources might not sufficiently respect needs or vulnerabilities of women. However, it is generally assumed that the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis will cover gender dimensions (e.g. needs, vulnerabilities, health issues etc.)</p>
3. Does the project use opportunities to secure and, when appropriate, enhance the economic, social and environmental benefits to women?	Yes	As part of the group of beneficiaries	There might be a risk that the training courses might fall short in accommodating special needs of women in order to enable participation (e.g. in terms of conditions of participation, time arrangements etc)

4. Does the project provide, when appropriate and consistent with national policy, for measures that strengthen women's rights and access to land and resources?	No		
5. Is there a risk that the project benefits women and men in unequal terms that cannot be justified as affirmative action? <sup>10</sup>	No		
6. Is there a risk that the project might negatively affect vulnerable groups <sup>11</sup> in terms of material or non-material livelihood conditions or contribute to their discrimination or marginalisation (only issues not captured in any of the sections above)?	Yes	There is a risk of elite capture that would personalise common benefits	There is a risk of vulnerable or marginalized people not being able to seek the opportunities provided by the project (e.g. training in farming/agroforestry) because they don't have access to land, farming resources or lack other essential conditions. This should be prevented by affirmative action wherever possible.
7. Is there a risk that the project would stir or exacerbate conflicts among communities, groups or individuals? Also consider dynamics of recent or expected migration including displaced people.	yes	The elites might bring in migrant workers as they work for less than the local populations	
8. Is there a risk that the project affects community health and safety (incl. human-wildlife conflicts)?	No		
9. Is there a risk that a water resource management project could lead to an outbreak of water-related disease?	No		
10. Might the project be directly or indirectly involved in forced labour and/or child labour?	No		
11. Is the project likely to induce immigration or significant increases in population density which might trigger environmental or social problems (with special consideration to women)?	No	There might be an influx of workers for the agroforestry plantations	The risk is not judged as significant.
12. Please specify any other risk that could negatively affect the livelihoods of local communities; also consider indirect, cumulative (due to interaction with other projects or activities, current or planned) or transboundary impacts.	N/A		
13. Is there a risk that the project affects the operation of	No		

<sup>10</sup> Affirmative action is a measure designed to overcome prevailing inequalities by favouring members of a disadvantaged group who suffer from discrimination. However, if not designed appropriately these measures could aggravate the situation of a previously advantaged groups leading to conflicts and social unrest.

<sup>11</sup> Depending on the context vulnerable groups could be landless, elderly, disabled or displaced people, children, ethnic minorities, people living in poverty, marginalised or discriminated individuals or groups.

dams or other built water infrastructure (reservoirs, irrigation systems, canals) e.g., by changing flows into those structures? If yes, has an inventory of existing water resources infrastructures in the project area been compiled and potential impacts analysed?			
14. Is there a risk that the project might conflict with existing legal social frameworks including traditional frameworks and norms?	Yes	As the government and its agencies in particular FDA considers itself as the owner of all land and forests they are said to be rather defensive with a view on community forest establishment etc.	One of the principles of the project is to promote a strong local communities empowerment for better appropriation and improved results sustainability. Hence the risk will be addressed by negotiating integrated land use plans in a participatory way with stakeholders and target groups

Other environmental impacts			
	<b>To be completed by project proponent</b>		<b>IUCN ESMS Reviewer</b>
	Yes, no, n/a	<i>If yes, describe potential issues, specify activities causing this and measures for preventing or minimising adverse impacts (if applicable)</i>	<i>Comments, additional considerations</i>
1. Will the project lead to increased waste production, in particular hazardous waste?	No		
2. Is the project likely to cause pollution or degradation of soil, soil erosion or siltation?	No		
3. Might the project cause pollution to air or create other nuisances such as dust, traffic, noise or odour?	No		
4. Will the project lead to significant increases of greenhouse gas emissions?	No		
5. Is there a risk that the project triggers consequential development activities which could lead to adverse environmental impacts, cumulative impacts due to interaction with other projects (current or planned) or to transboundary impacts (consider only issues not captured under the Biodiversity Standard)?	TBD	As the project aims to establish agroforestry in areas presently not used, this could lead to environmental degradation if not done properly.	
6. Do any of the planned activities fall within specific legislation requiring environmental and/or social impact assessments? If yes, specify.	No		
7. Is there a risk that the project might conflict with existing environmental regulations or provisions of the host country?	No		

<p><b>Please summarise key issue identified through the questions above. Aside from these issues, are there any other potential negative impacts?</b></p>	<p>No significant risks have been identified; however the project should be proactive in designing measures (e.g. training) to assure that they are accessible by women and vulnerable groups.</p>
<p><b>Have measures for avoiding impacts already been considered? Are they sufficient?</b></p> <p><b>Are assessments required to better understand the impacts and identify mitigation measures? What specific topics are to be assessed?</b></p>	<p>Required actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data on dependency on forest resources and vulnerability of certain groups (women, vulnerable groups) are gathered as part of in Activity 1.14. ). These findings should be taken into consideration when designing training measures to assure that socio-cultural conditions of women and vulnerable groups are appropriately addressed.</li> <li>• The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis needs to assure that gender dimensions are sufficiently covered (e.g. water needs, vulnerabilities, health issues etc.).</li> </ul>

Climate change risks		
Risks caused by a failure to adequately consider the effects of climate change		
	<b>To be completed by project proponent</b>	<b>IUCN ESMS Reviewer</b>
	Yes, no, n/a <i>If yes, describe potential issues, specify activities causing this and measures for preventing or minimising adverse impacts (if applicable)</i>	<i>Comments, additional considerations</i>
1. Have historical, current, and future trends in climate variability and climate change in the project area been taken into consideration?	Yes	The objective to enhance the deforestation of watersheds is proposed as mitigation measure to reduced water availability downstream.
2. Is the project area prone to specific climate hazards (e.g., floods, droughts, wildfires, landslides, cyclones, storm surges, etc.)?	Yes	Droughts.
3. Are changes in biophysical conditions in the project area triggered by climate change expected to impact people's livelihoods? Are some groups more susceptible than others (e.g., women or vulnerable groups)?	TBD	

<p>4. Is there a risk that current or projected climate variability and changes might affect the implementation of project activities or their effectiveness and the sustainability of the project (e.g., through risk and events such as landslides, erosion, flooding, or droughts)?</p>	<p>TBD</p>		<p>Climate variability or changes might affect the sustainability of promoted restoration interventions. There might be a risk that some native species don't adapt to changing rainfall, temperature and other climate patterns.</p>
<p>5. Could project activities potentially increase the vulnerability of local communities and the ecosystem to current or future climate variability and changes (e.g., through risks and events such as landslides, erosion, flooding or droughts)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>If the promoted agricultural/agroforestry practices are not adapted to climate variability or change, they might jeopardize the livelihood of farmers who have invested in the techniques and depend on the income.</p>
<p>6. Does the project seek opportunities to enhance the adaptive capacity of communities and ecosystem to climate change?</p>	<p>No</p>		
<p><b>Please summarise key isssue identified through the questions above.</b></p>			
<p><b>Have measures for avoiding impacts already been considered? Are they sufficient?</b> <b>Are assessments required to better understand the impacts and identify mitigation measures? What specific topics are to be assesed</b></p>		<p>Required actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When designing agroforestry practices and other sustainable land use measures changes in biophysical conditions due to climate change need to be taken into consideration.</li> </ul>	

### Appendix 10: Environmental and Social Management Plan

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)						ESMP Monitoring	Progress
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Social & Environ-mental Impacts	Mitigation measures	Feasibility and sustainability (technical, operational, cultural)	Resources & costs	Responsibility	Schedule	Evidence of completion	Status of completion
<b>IUCN Standards</b>							
<b>IUCN Standard on Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions – to be determined once restrictions have been defined</b>							
Impact on peoples' livelihood through restricting access to forest resources - TBD	Provision of benefits (e.g. access to training)	Full compensation might not be possible as not all affected people are engaged in farming	No additional costs	Project Implementation Unit			
	Negotiation of integrated land use plans in participatory way reduces risks of impacts		No additional costs	Project Implementation Unit			
<b>IUCN Standard on Indigenous Peoples – to be determined based on site-specific analysis</b>							
<b>IUCN Standard on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources</b>							
Low risk of an inadvertent introduction of non-native	Risk management ensured through rigorously respecting protocols for Germplasm	Common practices	No additional costs	Project Implementation	During project implementation	Ongoing risk management strategy	

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)						ESMP Monitoring	Progress
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<b>Social &amp; Environmental Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation measures</b>	<b>Feasibility and sustainability</b> (technical, operational, cultural)	<b>Resources &amp; costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Evidence of completion</b>	<b>Status of completion</b>
species.	procurement.			Unit			
<b>IUCN Standard on Cultural Heritage - to be determined based on site-specific analysis</b>							
Access restriction affect communities in their cultural practices - TBD							
<b>Other environmental or social impacts<sup>12</sup></b>							
Women or vulnerable groups might not be able to access the project's benefits	Designing project benefits (e.g. training measures) based on a good understanding of socio-cultural conditions of women and vulnerable groups		Data gathered as part of in Activity 1.14.	Project Implementation Unit	At the beginning of project impl.		
Strategic Action Programmes (SAP) for the protection and the management the water resources might not	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis need to assure that gender dimensions are sufficiently covered (e.g. water needs, vulnerabilities, health		No additional costs	Project Implementation Unit	According to project schedule	SAP reflecting important gender dimension	

<sup>12</sup> Other impacts might include: impacts due to wildlife conflicts (human casualties, livestock or crop losses), negative impacts on women (e.g. increased work load or increased exposure to risks etc.), negative impact on vulnerable groups, negative environmental impacts such as increased waste or greenhouse gas emissions, social or environmental impacts induced by increased immigration into area

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)						ESMP Monitoring	Progress
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<b>Social &amp; Environmental Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation measures</b>	<b>Feasibility and sustainability</b> (technical, operational, cultural)	<b>Resources &amp; costs</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Evidence of completion</b>	<b>Status of completion</b>
sufficiently respect needs or vulnerabilities of women.	issues etc.)						
<b>Climate change risks</b>							
Risk of vulnerability of local communities and the ecosystem to current or future climate variability and changes	When designing agroforestry practices and other sustainable land use measures changes in biophysical conditions due to climate change need to be taken into consideration.		No additional costs	Project Implementation Unit	According to project schedule		
<b>Main reviewer findings:</b>						<b>Status ESMP</b> <input type="checkbox"/> on track <input type="checkbox"/> slight delays <input type="checkbox"/> major delays/issues	
						Date/Name of reviewer:	
<b>New ESMS risks that have emerged</b>							

## Appendix 11: Socio-economic context assessment<sup>13</sup>

The remaining portion of the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem in the Mano River Union (Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) generates significant environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, storage of biological diversity and provision of hydrological services. The remaining forests with a surface area of 9.3 Million ha further embrace significant amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>, which - if cut down - would be realised and accelerate the ongoing climate change. Finally, the Mano River Union Forests are home and provide livelihoods for around 10 Million people from more than 100 different ethnic groups.

In order to obtain a comprehensive insight, in April and May 2016, IUCN's Project Preparation Team visited the four intervention sites of the proposed IUCN/GEF Project to learn from and discuss with officials from forestry, environmental and agricultural departments, rural populations as well as managers and practitioners from the private sector, academia, multi- and bilateral institutions and national and international NGOs. Based on these discussions, IUCN proposes hereinafter market-based solutions that use the monetarized true value of ecosystem services provided by the remaining forests in order to provide credible incentives to the Mano River Union Nations, down to the farmers on the ground to 'out-compete' the drivers of ecosystem destruction.

This chapter outlines first the incentives needed to out-compete the drivers of deforestation before assessing the specificities of the four intervention sites and outlining the site specific approach to be implemented under the proposed IUCN/GEF Project within the overall conceptual framework established in this proposal.

### 1. Forest and forest use

African forests have long fired peoples' imaginations: the death bed of numerous intrepid explorers and fetid breeding ground of deadly diseases, most recently the sinister Ebola virus. Africa's forests began to resemble their modern composition around 65-70 million years ago when the African and American continents separated. Since then climate change repeatedly had significant impacts on these forests. Some 10 million years ago the African forests dried and most of the many palm species died out. About 5 million years ago the Sahara opened up in an arid phase, and the genus *Homo* separated off from the other African apes. The oldest stone tools found in forests date to about 400,000 BP, evidence of man-made forest fires can be found all over and it seems likely that savannas were maintained through fires already by stone-age people. Iron-age remains are abundant and it is rare that soil profiles on hilltops (preferred sites for villages) are without both charcoal and remains of iron smelting. From what we can piece together from archeological digs, nearly all African rainforests had been converted to a farming mosaic dominated by groves of oil palms some 2,000 years ago.

Starting around 550 CE a dramatic population crash affected the entire region, and over the next 500-600 years natural re-growth transformed these forest-farm mosaics into today's rainforests. More recently there are multiple examples of human population declines leading to regeneration of forests, which take on the structure and the aura of 'primary' forests in just a century or two and a major rinderpest epidemic at the turn of last century hit much of the livestock in West Africa, resulting in further human tragedy and another growth spurt of forests in today's Mano River Union countries.

In all Mano River Union countries, the centralised states introduced by external powers submerged the existing land tenure systems that centred on the dominating traditional livelihood of shifting cultivation. This resulted in incongruences: Land and resources are held in forms of customary ownership, whereas the land tenure laws make land state owned, thereby

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<sup>13</sup> Dr. Kai Schmidt-Soltau, Social Science Solutions GmbH, Seestrasse 3, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

overriding customary ownership. Therefore, forest and resource related laws are ambiguous as they try to regulate customary access and use through formal procedures for state owned lands. This has resulted in the fact that national laws are generally not obeyed and local people depend largely on non-legalized resource use. It also transformed citizens and their governments into competitors over rural resources. While over the last years a comprehensive reform agenda acknowledged the rights of rural populations to access land and land-based resources, land tenure systems, which sparked of the conflicts in the region, have not yet been fully integrated into this reform process and constitute to be a key challenge to any form of sustainable natural resource management.

For the local population, forests are traditionally the one and only source of livelihood. Water, food, building material, medicine etc. come from there. But over time, their integration into market economies has resulted in increasing demands for manufactured goods and social services. All this requires cash and forces rural populations to commercialise their forest products. While forest people are widely recognised as the traditional owners of forests and in control of the access to forest resources, their ownership is not recognised by the legal system and land, timber, fuel-wood, game and NTFPs etc. became open access resources. Most foreign forest user still pay rent to the communities and/or provide some sort of benefits, but many don't, based on the claim that forests are government property and that they have obtained licences from central governments. In all Mano River Union Countries, concessions, plantations and national parks are gazetted on customary community land without the need to obtain their free prior and informed consent. As communities are presently not in the position to restrict the state sanctioned forest use by outsiders, the rents/benefits realised by them remain largely at the discretion of the outside forest users and are consequently mostly symbolic and far below market value. In Liberia, for example, "social agreements" between logging and mining concessions and the local communities are only established after the concession agreement with the state is signed and therefore their existence, content, value and implementation remains at the discretion of the logging/mining concessioners. This coerces forest populations to live in extreme poverty and transforms citizens and their governments to become competitors over natural resource use, thus undermining the condition sine qua non of sustainable natural resource management.

The influence of local populations on decision making processes has been insignificant until very recently, while their support for any successful natural resource management is crucial as governments are unable to effectively control and restrict access and use of any ecosystems including protected areas. In reaction, most governments tried to integrate local people into the elaboration of the ongoing reform agenda and have put in place benefit sharing schemes for forest related revenues. Unfortunately, these benefit sharing schemes are not fully operational (Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire) or voluntary (Liberia and Guinea). Further, the depth of consultation processes allows room for improvement: National NGOs have established themselves as representatives of local interests but many have been unable to deliver on such ambitious claims and are often merely franchisees of international NGOs, and/or tax-avoiding enterprises of local elites. While the forests are plastered with signboards of NGOs documenting their achievements, if one triangulates these claims with the local people, one either learns that these groups are unknown or that the advertised "community farms" etc. are owned by a local elite and the community engagement limited to the chance to work from time to time as day-labourer for USD 1-1.5/day.

Another example is the "participatory" elaboration of the community forestry law in Liberia: In 2008 a draft had been elaborated by the Forest Development Authority (FDA), the donors and international conservation NGOs assembled under the Liberian Forest Initiative. To obtain a feedback on the law from the beneficiaries - i.e. the 700,000 people from more than 5,000 communities in and around the forested areas - the FDA had only funds to organised 6 local hearings. Consequently, 8 years after the adaptation of this law and a large number of donor funded pilot projects, most forest communities don't know that they actually can obtain and secure legal titles to forests under the community forestry legislation and even those 18

community forests that were established are unable to generate incentives that are able to outcompete the drivers of deforestation.

In result, without additional effort forest populations remain excluded from the general development process, alienated from decision making, deprived of their full ownership of forests and ecosystems and therefore unable to realize revenues and rents that reflect the true value of standing forests. While forest populations in the four intervention zones (in total around 500,000 individuals; see detailed assessment in the site level intervention strategy) generate presently an estimated USD 10/ha\*year from revealing subsistence use and small scale commercialisation, cutting down their forests for large scale plantations (oil palms, rubber, cassava, coffee, cacao etc) enables incomes of around USD 30/ha\*year.<sup>14</sup> This potential income increase is a powerful driver of deforestation that – as experience show - cannot be stopped through enforcement and/or moral incentives and sensitisation.

This is not new and a shared understanding among the stakeholders of the IUCN/GEF Project Proposal. In response, the Proposal aims to combine strategies, which have been successfully tested in the region, to enable local communities around protected areas to realise revenues from standing forests under the national community forest legislation that are equal or higher than what they could achieve when cutting down these forests. The IUCN/GEF project will enable local people to generate incomes from a) certified agroforestry products, b) REDD+ and c) payment for environmental services.

If one assumes that the households on the ground can realise incomes from a) certified agroforestry of around USD 12/ha\*year and b&c) USD 18/ha\*year based on a CO<sub>2</sub> price of US12/t for standing forests and a carbon absorption capacity of standing forests of 1.5t CO<sub>2</sub>/ha\*year, it becomes evident that this value proposition is able to outcompete the drivers or deforestation and generate sufficient incentives to keep forests alive. As incentives only work when they are realised by the smallest economic units (i.e. the households), the proposed IUCN/GEF Project will not only build capacities in the buffer zone settlements to establish mutual acceptable agreements with the national REDD+ mechanisms and enterprises purchasing certified agroforestry products, but also to link through the “sub-division” of community forests into “household owned/managed parcels” households and national/global markets in order to provide tangible incentives to the households to embark on the sustainable management of forests and therefore conserve ecosystems in the Mano River Union Countries.

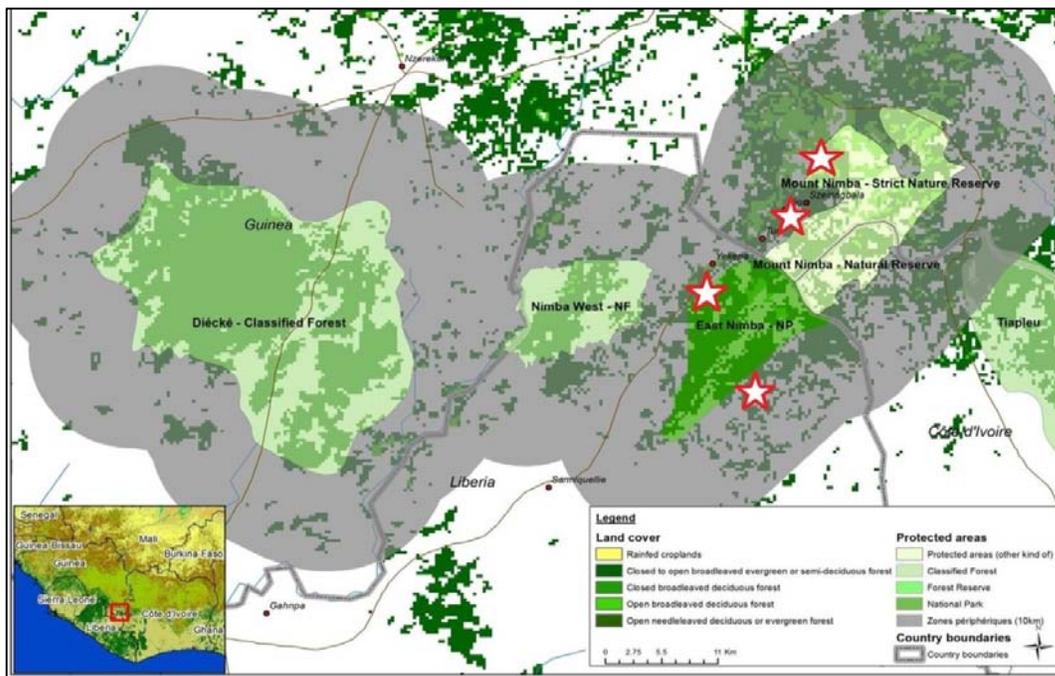
To avoid elite capture of the initiatives proposed under the IUCN/GEF Project as well as other adverse impacts on the local population, a participatory impact analysis will be conducted after year 1 of the project to assure that the local population is benefiting from the project and not exposed to any adverse impacts. If at that stage, there are any indication that local elites or other actors have used the enhanced knowledge to establish agroforestry plantations that exclude the local people from the group of beneficiaries i.e. owners and/or merely involve them as labourers and/or any other adverse impacts imposed on the local population and/or in particular vulnerable subgroups, the IUCN/GEF Project will have sufficient time to put in place correct actions. This corrective action might include supporting local communities themselves to secure legal ownership of agroforestry plantations through the existing community forestry legislation in the four target countries, more targeted interventions and/or recalibration of the project.

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<sup>14</sup> Prince's Rainforests Project (2008) African Task Force Report.

## 2. Site specific baseline information and intervention strategies

### 2.1. Site 1: Diécké - Nimba



The transboundary protected area complex Diécké Nimba in Guinea, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire is largely characterised by the industrial exploitation of natural resources:

- The Nimba mountain range in Guinea and Liberia is used for iron ore mining by international companies such as ArcelorMittal in Liberia and Rio Tinto in Guinea as well as a number of smaller regional companies.
- The area surrounding the Diécké National Forest in Guinea, is used for industrial logging with the Chinese company Forêt Forte being the largest.

**Baseline:** While there are a limited number of communities located inside the protected areas (around 30 in Diécké Classified Forest and 4 in West Nimba), there are nearly 100 communities with an estimated 70,000 people around the Diecke Forest, 80 communities with an estimated 50,000 people around the Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve in Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire, 25 communities with an estimated 10,000 people around the East Nimba National Forest and 32 communities with an estimated 25,000 people around the proposed West Nimba National Forest.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> It seems unlikely that West Nimba can be successfully protected as it is a) located within the mining concession of ArcelorMittal and b) already contains two open pit iron ore mines (Mt Yuelliton and Mt. Gangra) as well as 4 communities (Bonfa, Zobeye, Bentol and Gbapa Mali).

The figures in this section as well as other baseline information were obtained from the local and administrative stakeholders as well as the following reports: AlcorMittral (2010 & 2013) ESIA Socio-economic Baseline Study. CI 2014: Liberia East Nimba Nature Reserve: News from the field; WBCSD Ecosystems (2012) Biodiversity and ecosystem services: Scaling up business solutions: Company case studies that help achieving global biodiversity targets; Liberia Forest Sector Project (2015 & 2016): Environmental and Social Management Framework & Process Framework; World Bank (2015) A national biodiversity offset scheme: A road map for Liberia's Mining Sector; World Bank (2010) Mainstreaming social and environmental considerations into the Liberian National Forestry Reform Process: A Strategic Environmental Assessment for Implementation of the 3Cs of the Forest Reform Law 2006; GEF/UNDP (2001): Conservation of biodiversity through integrated participatory management in the Nimba Mountains/Guinea.

To understand local challenges and opportunities, the project preparation team engaged with 67 individuals from 4 communities (Liagbala & Yolowee in Liberia and Tuo & Szeinngbala in Guinea; see location marked in map above)<sup>16</sup>: Despite increasing conservation efforts, livelihoods are still centred on hunting and shifting agriculture (mostly rice and cassava). From that perspective it seems not surprising that the local people have generally a rather critical view towards the mining companies, the governmental structures managing the protected areas (FDA in Liberia & CEGENS & DNEF in Guinea) as well as the conservation NGOs active in the area (FFI and CI).

While the local people perceive themselves as the customary owners of all land and resources, they perceive these “external” actors as restricting their forest use with little or no compensation. From their perspective, it makes little difference whether they lose land to the mines and protected areas and/or whether NGO’s tell them to stop hunting, logging and/or change their land use pattern from shifting cultivation to a more permanent form of agriculture. This friction is of course not new and most forest communities indicated that compensations to offset their losses have been promised by the mining companies as well as the protection agencies and NGOs. However, they all agreed that the promised employment, infrastructure development, and/or agricultural support either did not materialise or did not work. The reasons for the later seem to be related to inadequate planning (establishment of health posts and schools without securing staffing, planting at the wrong season, preference to local elites, who are not farmers etc.) and a focus on “community project”, which are known to be unable to provide tangible incentives for a constant engagement at household level. The same has to be said for the three existing community forests in the buffer zone of the East Nimba Nation Forest (Blei, Gbah and ZDR). While they were established with the help of conservation NGOs, they did not yet provide tangible incentives to attract the households to engage in their management beyond participation in general meetings and to stop them from hunting and shifting cultivation livelihoods.

In contrast to other sites under this IUCN/GEF Project, the governmental structures in charge of protected area management in the Diécké - Nimba Complex are well funded, largely through grants provided by the international mining companies through international conservation NGOs. While their focus is on law enforcement in and around the protected areas, they also engage with communities in the buffer zones with the objective to provide alternative livelihoods as compensation measures for the loss of incomes from the now protected forests. This work is performed largely by international conservation NGOs such as FFI and CI including their subcontractors and funded by mining companies as informal environmental compensation measures. While the approach is quite innovative, its effectiveness allows room for improvement as according to the potential beneficiaries all projects such as community rice farms, fishponds, cane rate husbandry etc. failed

**Proposed approach:** The Diécké-Nimba Site, with its mining companies that meet international standards, is well suited to operationalise for the first time in the Mano River Union Countries payments for environmental services from mining companies through community forests under supervision by the national REDD+ mechanisms to local households in and around protected areas. This provides on the one hand the mining companies with carbon credits to offset their overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and the local households with tangible incentives to keep forests alive. The approach of the IUCN/GEF Project is to forge a binding agreement between all stakeholders (local people, local protection agencies and mining companies) based on the well-established model of payment for environmental

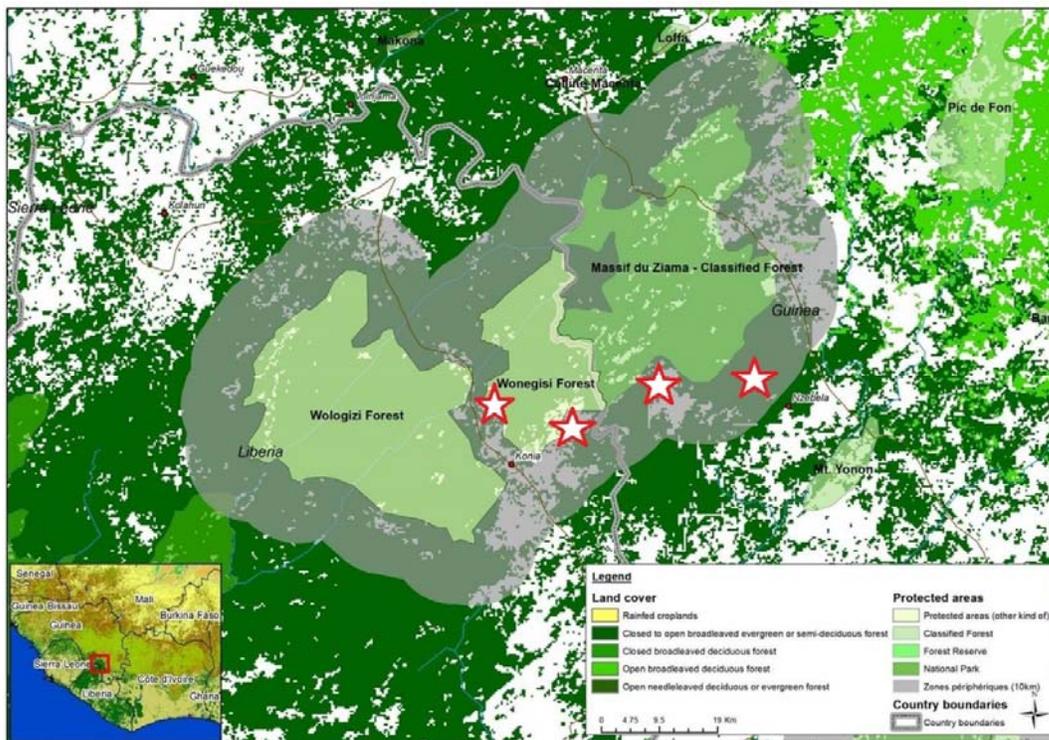
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<sup>16</sup> Due to the limited time available and logistical challenges all meetings were organised spontaneously when arriving at the village and included all those that were present in the village at the time of the visit and later triangulated in focus group discussions with women, elders, hunters etc.

services, the legal provisions for community forests and the existing REDD+ mechanism within the three countries.



## 2.2. Site 2: Wonegesi Ziama



The ecosystem of the Wonegesi-Ziama Complex in Guinea and Liberia is threatened by a combination of mining, logging, agribusinesses and local livelihoods and its most remarkable feature is that the proposed Wonegesi National Forest has been selected as pilot site of national REDD+ mechanism in Liberia.

**Baseline:** The *Massif du Ziama Biosphere Reserve in Guinea* (120,000 ha), with its 60,000 ha core zone in which hunting and logging is prohibited, is mountainous and reaches an altitude of 1,400 m. About 35,000 peoples live within the biosphere reserve and beside of traditional livelihoods such as hunting and shifting cultivation there is a 30,000 ha forestry concession, a quinine plantation with processing plant and a number of oil palm plantations located in the less protected areas. Since 2013 certified coffee is produced in increasing quantities based on initiatives from Rio Tinto. There are also a number of smaller projects by FFEM and UNOPS supporting sustainable forest management in selected villages. The key

challenge and opportunity here is to align, harmonise and scale up the various existing initiatives in order to generate tangible benefits for the local people.<sup>17</sup>

The **proposed Wonegizi National Forest** in Liberia is surrounded by 11 communities with an estimated total population of 15,000 people. In 2014 GEF provided under the EXPAN Project a grant to the FDA to conduct a socioeconomic study of the surrounding villages to understand the local drivers of deforestation and what incentives are needed to be generated through the REDD mechanism to outcompete the present trend to transform forests into large scale local plantations. While the study showed that an estimated \$ 0.5m/year could be generated from REDD, the present approach to use an international conservation NGO to manage the proposed national forest allows room for improvement as they charge 2/3 of the income generated, while the 15,000 local people remain with 1/3, which is not perceived as tangible incentive by the local population.<sup>18</sup>

It is generally assumed that the **proposed Wologizi National Forest** in Liberia might not be gazetted within the foreseeable future as a) it contains the largest iron ore deposit in Liberia, b) it has been since the 1980ies part of an iron ore concession that was purchased in 2013 by the Indian Jindal Steel and Power Company, c) it is earmarked as logging concession under the national forest production plan and d) densely populated.

To understand local challenges and opportunities, the project preparation team engaged with 81 individuals from 4 communities (Dorzenilor & Zigida Town in Liberia and Vesou & Gboda in Guinea; see location marked in map above). In Liberia, the local population indicated that after an initial phase during which they reduced hunting and establishment of new farms in the proposed Wonegizi National Forest, they now have returned to their former full utilisation of the area as they don't perceive the offered incentives as sufficient to change their land use patterns towards agroforestry etc. They indicated that the local sub-consultants of FFI didn't involve them into the design and planning of interventions and merely showed up in the villages, selected some people to work with and established with them (at the wrong time of the year) some wetland rice farms, provided them with some cane rates and cassava seedlings and asked them to manage these "community projects". As a consequence, all these projects failed as nobody felt responsible and even the cane rats died of starvation during the planting season as nobody had time for this as it doesn't provide tangible economic benefits at household level.

In turn, the local populations in Guinea indicated that those that produce "certified" coffee are quite satisfied with the financial incentives as the company buys coffee directly from households that grow coffee under tree cover and follow the prescribed use of pesticides etc. While they noted that the realised income is higher than from non-certified coffee, they observed that it entails more work and suggested that with increasing coffee prices it might be more economic to shift to non-certified coffee. They finally expressed the fear that the fact that they don't have legal titles to their land and asked to leave large trees on their farms might not sufficiently protect their land against future use for logging etc.

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<sup>17</sup> Information were obtained from local stakeholders as well as from the following published sources: UNOPS (2015) Activités communautaires dans les villages environnants de la forêt classée de Ziama; FFEM/IUCN (2015) Appui à la conservation de la biodiversité de la forêt classée de Ziama et la réduction des conflits hommes éléphants dans la zone périphérique; PAMPIG (2016) Le processus d'accompagnement du Café Ziama Macenta; KFW/GTZ (2010) Guinea Forestry Programme (1990 -2004):

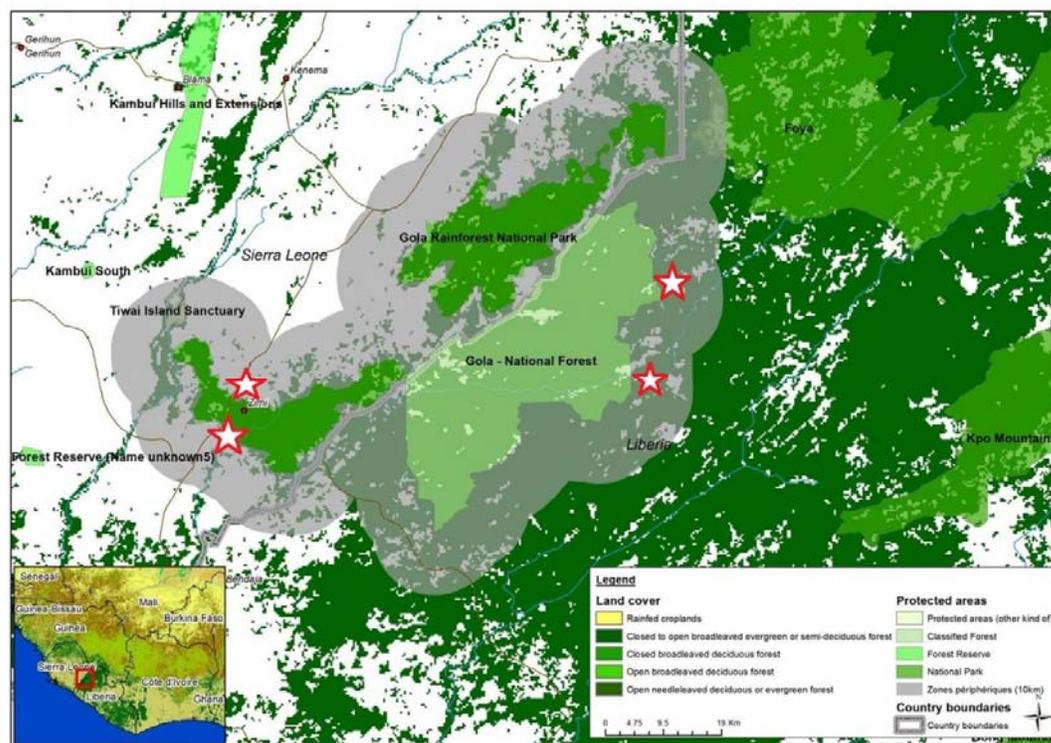
<sup>18</sup> Information were obtained from local stakeholders as well as from the following published sources: Liberia Forest Sector Project (2015 & 2016): Environmental and Social Management Framework & Process Framework; World Bank (2010) Mainstreaming social and environmental considerations into the Liberian National Forestry Reform Process: A Strategic Environmental Assessment for Implementation of the 3Cs of the Forest Reform Law 2006; FDA/GEF (2015) Socio economic study of the Wonegezi and Grebo Forests; FFI (2015) Community based conservation: The Wonegizi REDD+ Pilot; FFI (2013) Plan Vivo – Project Idea Note: Wonegizi community based REDD+ Project.

In sum, there are a good number of innovative approaches tested within the Wonegizi-Ziamba site, but it seems that there is room for improvement with a view on alignment, scaling up and combining the various existing interventions.

**Proposed approach:** The proposed IUCN/GEF project will cross-fertilise and combine the existing interventions (agroforestry and REDD) across the border to generate tangible incentives at household level that are able to outcompete the drivers of deforestation. It will further engage with the actors and communities within the Wonegizi area to broker, based on the successful interventions from the two other areas, a sustainable management concept that places as much as possible forests under sustainable use. It aims further to qualify the local stakeholders to run the REDD site management to reduce external costs and assure that benefits are realised at household level rather than captured by international conservation NGOs.



### 2.1.3. Site 3: Gola Forest



The Gola forests in Liberia and Sierra Leone are from a biodiversity and ecological perspective the most important area within the Mano River Union Countries as they include rather large areas of undisturbed forests. There are however 240 communities within the protected areas and its buffer zones (180 in Sierra Leone and 60 in Liberia) with an estimated total population of 40,000 people, but many of these are migrants that either work in the large scale open pit gold mines or as artisanal diamante miners. Local livelihoods are therefore less centred around slash and burn farming than in the other sites as mining is said

to be more profitable. The second most important livelihood is said to be hunting and the game either sold to the miners and/or transported to the regional and national markets.

In Sierra Leone, the Gola Rainforest Conservation LG, has been set up as not-for-profit company to manage the **Gola National Park** with the help of the Gola REDD project that aims to sell CO<sub>2</sub> credits, validated by the Verified Carbon Standards and the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance. The Company is founded by three partners: The Government of Sierra Leone represented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Food Security, The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone. While beside of law enforcement and research the funds are earmarked to be used to “enable sustainable resource management throughout the project zone by engaging in a suite of livelihood improvement activities with local communities”, the level of local participation seems to allow room for improvement.

In Liberia, the GolaMA, which includes the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia, Forestry Development Authority, Estelle Levin Ltd. (a UK based mining consultancy), research groups from Cambridge & Wageningen Universities and the Rainforest Alliance aims to establish with funding from the European Union a sustainable management concept for the proposed **Gola National Park** and its buffer zone. The approach is quite innovation as GolaMA aims to establish Community Forests and financial sustainability business plans to ensure that forest communities are benefiting from sustainable and alternative income generating activities and carbon credits marketed under the national REDD mechanism to reduce bushmeat hunting/trading of protected species in the project area and deforestation in the buffer zones as well as unmanaged artisanal mining. While similar to Sierra Leone, the concept is quite innovative, it might be able to benefit and engage more closely with the key stakeholders (i.e. the local population) and include them more actively in the planning and implementation process.<sup>19</sup>

**Baseline:** To understand local challenges and opportunities, the project preparation team engaged with 46 individuals from 4 communities (Kortee & SLC Camp in Liberia and Ngenkpa & Pewe Makpai Town in Sierra Leone; see location marked in map above). While on the Liberian site, the local people were rather optimistic that the demarcation of the proposed Gola National Forest would accommodate local livelihoods and settlements and offer tangible benefits, the local informants in Sierra Leone expressed the fear that most if not all of the promised benefits associated with the national park would not materialise, while even the most basic compensation schemes for crop damage near the park and other costs of the human wildlife conflict are not functional at all. While one of the communities visited in Sierra Leone had benefited from some livelihood support investments, the “community projects” did either not work (mostly because nobody felt responsible and/or because they offered limited incentives) or were privatised. Ngekpaa had for example benefited from technical and financial support to establish a community forest and construct an office for the community forest management team, but soon after construction the village chief moved in and uses it as ever since as his private residence.

While mining is generally perceived as having rather destructive impacts on ecosystems, recent initiatives such as the one spearheaded by the Alliance for Responsible Mining and

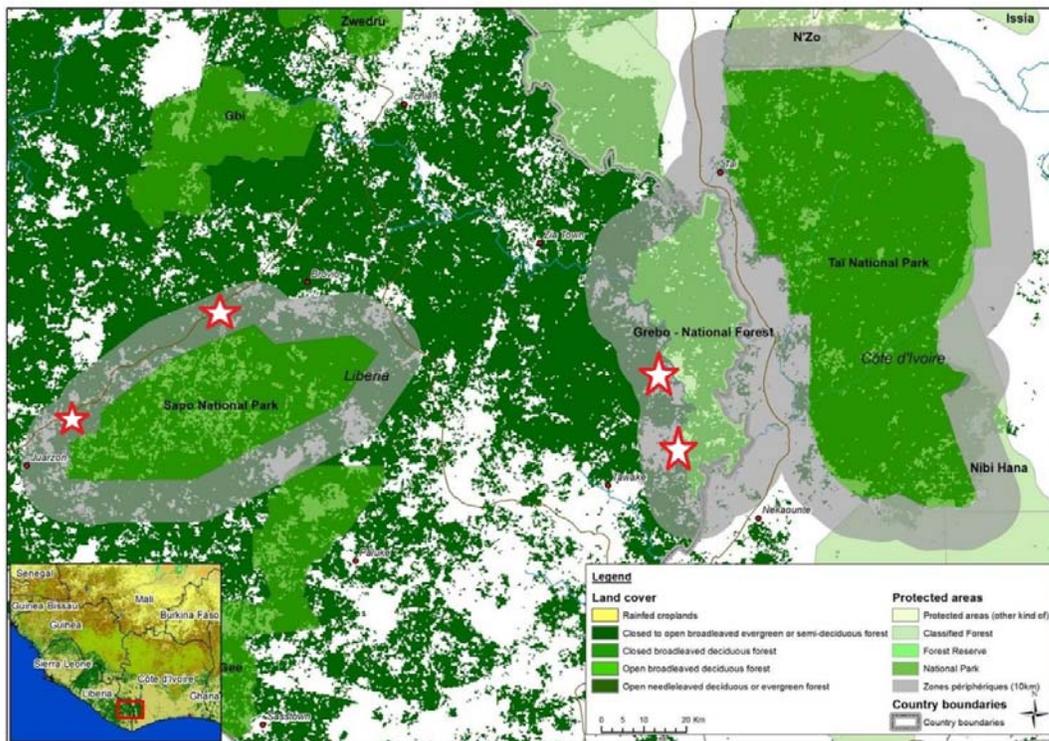
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<sup>19</sup> Information were obtained from local stakeholders as well as from the following published sources: Liberia Forest Sector Project (2015 & 2016): Environmental and Social Management Framework & Process Framework; World Bank (2010) Mainstreaming social and environmental considerations into the Liberian National Forestry Reform Process: A Strategic Environmental Assessment for Implementation of the 3Cs of the Forest Reform Law 2006; Aureus Mining (2014) New Liberty Mine Social Impact Report and RAP ; Across the River (2012) Socio-economic baseline report for across the river – a trans-boundary peace park for Sierra Leone and Liberia; Khan, Q & Hayward A (2012) : Human Influence of Sierra Leonean Forest Mosaic Landscapes ; VCS (2015) The Gola REDD Project ; Booij, A (2014) Sustaining peace or conflict : An analysis of the effects of sustainable natural resource management efforts on durable peace building in the Liberian Gola Forest area ; GEF (2014) Country Portfolio Study : Sierra Leone (1998-2013) ; Eco Security (2008) : An assessment of the carbon offset potential of the Gola Forest.

the Collaborative Group on Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining have shown that adverse environmental impacts can be mitigated. One of the reasons is that artisanal diamante mining that does not depend on the use of chemicals and can therefore be aligned with an overall sustainable natural resource management approach. With a view on large scale mining, the Gola Forest Area also has some potential as some of the major companies in the area such as Aureus Mining Inc. are in discussion with IFC and other international lenders and therefore quite open to discuss the potentials to offset their CO2 footprint and to engage with local communities.

**Proposed approach:** The proposed IUCN/GEF project will focus in the Gola Forest Site on three issues a) strengthen the participation of the local population in the management of the natural resource management and the REDD Projects, b) enhance the recognition of mining in the overall natural resource management concept by engaging industrial mining companies through payment for environmental service agreements and artisanal diamante miners through a local certification process and c) introduce approaches to the management of community forests that generate tangible incentives at household level in order to outcompete the drivers of deforestation.

#### 2.1.4. Site 4: Sapo, Grebo and Tai



**Sapo National Park** was created in 1983 as Liberia’s first protected area. While being abandoned during the civil wars from 1989 to 2003, it was re-established and significantly extended with limited or no local consultations in 2004/5 with significant effort and financial support from the donor community. In that process around 5,000 people were evicted from the park largely without receiving the compensation, replacement housing and livelihood restoration promised in the relevant Resettlement Action Plan (World Bank RP 355). This obviously didn’t increase the acceptability of conservation measures and after some years of active management, Sapo National Park is today again largely abandoned with limited if any

enforcement. There are around 60 communities with an estimated population of 20,000 people in and around the park.<sup>20</sup>

**Grebo National Forest** is located along the border between Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire and very close to the Tai National Park in Cote d'Ivoire. The area is earmarked to become a National Park, but presently it is mostly abandoned. KfW and GIZ have recently launched projects to establish an ecological corridor from the Sapo National Park to the Grebo National Forest and Tai National Park. There are around 80 communities with an estimated population of around 25,000 people around and in the National Forest including some large settlements in the proposed national park. While GEF provided under the EXPAN Project funds to conduct a socio-economic study of the Grebo Forest in 2014, the report is not publically available.

**Baseline:** To understand local challenges and opportunities, the project preparation team engaged with 104 individuals from 4 communities (Kauti & Chebioh near Sapo National Park and Nyanwriken Kiteobo & Matuaken near Grebo National Forest; see location marked in map above). Around Sapo National Park, the population expressed their concern that the promises of alternative livelihood projects made after the relaunch of the park in 2005/6 did not materialise and that the three community forests didn't generate any income for the local population. They further were rather unsatisfied with the social agreements with the logging companies along the northern and western boundaries of the park as in their view much has been promised, but very little finally implemented. Similar views have been expressed by those living near the Grebo National Forests. When asked about the high number of signboards established along the roads that suggest that livelihood projects have been established to compensate for the loss of income triggered by conservation measures, they stated that these boards were all fake and not associated to any real projects. The people outside the two forests further noted that quite some of their local elites have hired local people to clear forests for large scale plantations (some of these plantations are called community plantations conducted by NGOs, that in reality seems to me merely enterprises) and that the involvement of the local population is limited to employment as day labourers for a salary of \$1 to \$1.5/day. As a consequence, they clearly stated that they find little reason to respect the requested land use restrictions and mostly indicated that the protected areas are largely paper parks as the FDA offices are abandoned and "enforcement" conducted only at the checkpoints along the road and largely limited to the extraction of bribes. While they generally agreed to no longer use the protected areas, their confidence that FDA and the conservation NGOs deliver on their promises is, based on past experience, rather limited. On the other hand, significant parts of the buffer zone are still forested and the people interested to practice agroforestry, if it provides them with tangible revenues that are equal or higher to other land use patterns.

**Proposed approach:** The proposed IUCN/GEF project will focus in the Sapo Grebo Site on the promotion of agroforestry in the buffer zones around the protected areas and optimise revenues by linking REDD+ and certification schemes to it in order to provide the local household with incentives that outcompete the drivers of deforestation. This includes supporting the local communities in obtain legal recognition of their forests under the community forests legislation including but not limited the subdivision of the community forest into household based plots, inviting companies that trade certified agroforestry

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<sup>20</sup> Information on these two forests were obtained from local stakeholders as well as from the following published sources: Liberia Forest Sector Project (2015 & 2016): Environmental and Social Management Framework & Process Framework; World Bank (2010) Mainstreaming social and environmental considerations into the Liberian National Forestry Reform Process: A Strategic Environmental Assessment for Implementation of the 3Cs of the Forest Reform Law 2006; FDA/GEF (2015) Socio economic study of the Wonegezi and Grebo Forests; World Bank/GEF (2004/5) Establishing the Basis for Biodiversity Conservation on Sapo National Park and in South-East Liberia; Government of Liberia (2005) Biodiversity Conservation at Sapo National Park: Resettlement Process Framework; IRIN (2005) Poachers, miners, squatters leave Sapo National Park.

products to the region in order to establish contact/contracts with local producers and support the communities to market their standing forest under the national REDD+ Mechanism in Liberia.



**Appendix 12: Procurement plan for the three years**

See Excel file attached to the project document

## **Appendix 13: Greenhouse gas emissions reductions estimates**

The Mano-River Union Region (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinée, Liberia, Sierra-Leone) hosts the Upper Guinea Forest, which is a hot spot for biodiversity. At the same time, this region suffers from deforestation and land degradation, causing a net loss in potential carbon sequestration by this pristine ecosystem. The aim of this document is to provide some assumptions on the activities underpinning the calculation for potential CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration of this project.

The project is expected to work on a relatively large area (181,800 Hectares). However, a lot of the project activities are related to capacity building for the stakeholders involved in forest management related activities in the region (local communities, farmers, Civil Society, Government agencies). This is due to the fact that since the Ebola virus outbreak (2013 – 2016) in the region, most resources have been allocated to the health sector, to the detriment of the environment sector. This has resulted in the relative absence of technical knowledge and relevant organizations involved in environmental protection in the areas covered by the project. Therefore it was assessed that this project should invest into capacity building in the region in order to pave the way for future investments after this project closes.

The lack of data available in the region does not allow for precise estimates at this stage. It is the aim of the project to provide more valid and up to date data on the status of natural resources in the region. This will enable to have further refined estimates on greenhouse gaz reduction potential.

At this stage, it is assumed that:

- The project will contribute to maintaining a forest cover area of 20,000 hectares while it would have been reduced by 2,000 hectares without;
- 1,000 hectares will be reforested while the land would have been degraded without the project;
- Plantations will cover 1000 hectares while this land would have been used for crop without the project.

Overall, this will result in 2.7 million TCO<sub>2</sub>eq as a result of the project activities.

A draft and very preliminary Ex-Act assessment is attached to the submission

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